



LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Cairo, January 6, 1939.

Strictly Confidential

No. 1494.

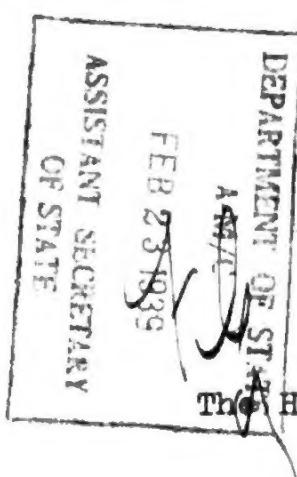
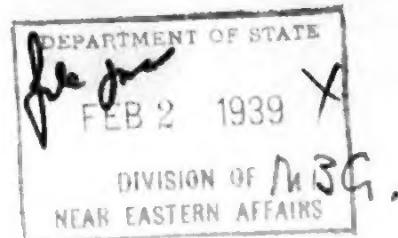


Subject: Transmitting Copy of Memorandum by Vice Consul
Jay Walker Relative to the Italian Position
in North and East Africa.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1939 FEB 2 PM 1 51

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS



STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

H.I.D. & O.M. (for confidence)

FEB 24 1939



The Honorable

The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy of a strictly confidential memorandum dated January 3, 1939, prepared by Vice Consul Jay Walker, relative to the Italian position in Ethiopia, the Yemen, Libya, and Egypt.

Respectfully yours,

Gordon P. Merriam
Charge d'Affaires ad interim

Enclosure as stated.

In triplicate.
file no. 820.02/710/800
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MAY 4 1939
FBI - NEW YORK

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Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 1494 of January 6,
1939, from the American Legation at Cairo.

(Correct Copy - ICG)

MEMORANDUM

(Strictly Confidential)

No. 17

January 3, 1939.

Abyssinia.

Adverting to previous data available from official confidential British sources relative to current conditions in Abyssinia, reports from the same sources now indicate that there is evidence of a slight change in the Italian Native Policy in Abyssinia since the advent of the Duke of Aosta as Viceroy. Apparently some official effort now seems to have been made to prevent the worst excesses of the Italian Blackshirts, and stories of brutality are not so frequently reported. Attempt is being made to use certain native chiefs to collect taxes and maintain order in the more remote districts but the experiment has not proven very successful as the local chiefs receive their remuneration on results, and naturally they have been as anxious as possible to squeeze the natives. This system has also led to trouble between the Chiefs allotted adjoining territory since, in their anxiety to add as much taxable area to their quota, they have not hesitated to fight for it. This is reported to have frequently happened in villages near the borderland in various spheres of influence. The British reports indicate that however good the intention of the present Viceroy may be, he has made very little practical progress against the solid block of corruption, bad administration, and lack of money, and has in no way made any advance against the solid core of revolt in Goggium and Amhara.

Recent British reports also indicate that the last six months has been a period of stagnation due to the rains, which were both late and exceptionally heavy. A serious attempt to crush the independent Abyssinian forces was expected to be under way by December the first, but such has not developed. The British believe that such delay may be due to three major reasons:

- (a) adequate communications have not yet been established since the rains.
- (b) there are reports to the effect that the Viceroy is endeavoring to get control over certain parts of the country by offers of pardon and gifts of money to the Abyssinian chiefs.

(o)

(c) it is felt that Rome does not wish to use additional forces at this time in Abyssinia to pacify the outlying districts as long as there are acute possibilities of armed strife in the Mediterranean area.

In the opinion of the British, the attempts of the Italians to gain the support of the Abyssinian chiefs is doomed to failure as their information is to the effect that all the important chiefs have rejected the Italian advances. The Abyssinian leader, Mangascia, refuses to accept the Italian offer because he is certain that whatever is promised, the Italians intend to hang or shoot him. Negasci is also determined to carry on to the end to avenge the murder of so many Abyssinian chiefs. Lesser chiefs are reported to have decided to follow these leaders. The British feel that the Italians are bound to have further extensive revolts on their hands in the early part of this year. It is interesting, in this connection, to note that certain parts of confidential British reports were recently given to the British press, and also appeared in the Egyptian Gazette of January 2, 1939.

According to British sources, the existing Italian forces in Abyssinia are probably as follows: (estimated on a conservative basis)

White troops.

Regular National Troops	8,000
Blackshirts	27,000
Labor Corps (Legioni Lavoratori) strength unknown -- there are several legions.	
TOTAL, exclusive of Labor Corps	<u>35,000</u>

Native troops. (from Somaliland, Eritrea,
and Libya)

Twenty-three Colonial Bands	80,000
Irregular Bands - organized as required - certainly not less than	
TOTAL	<u>20,000</u>
	<u>100,000</u>

Air Forces -- data not available.

Red Sea Area.

In spite of one of the terms of the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April 1938, providing that the two contracting parties guarantee to respect the integrity and independence of Saudi Arabia and the Yemen, the British are already concerned regarding the activities of the Italians in Yemen. It is known that the Imam of Yemen has, on several occasions, accepted gifts of military

tanks

tanks and other armed equipment from the Italians and at present there are understood to be a number of senior Italian officers in that country on various missions. The British report that the present Imam is an elderly man and in case of his death there are bound to be further attempts by Italy to increase her influence in that country to the detriment of present British interests there. Apparently, the British are also keeping a close watch on the Italians who are reported to be fortifying their islands along the coast of Eritrea in the Red Sea, which is narrow at that point and close to territories under British control.

Libya.

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British sources indicate that the Italians continue to maintain some 80,000 troops in Libya, this number includes about 10,000 men sent to Libya during the European crisis in September 1938. The failure of the Italians to reduce their armed forces in that area in compliance with the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April 1938, has the close attention of the British Command at Cairo. This alleged breach of agreement has been freely reported in the Cairo British press recently, and there is reason to believe that the British are making good use locally of the military situation in Libya and its menace to Egypt. It is noted that the British press has not failed to compare the alleged favorable position of the Moslems in British-controlled territories with those in Libya, where the Arabs are reported to be miserably oppressed.

The British military do not look upon the recent widely advertised scheme of sending some 1,880 Italian families as colonists to Libya as anything more than a propaganda campaign to take the public's mind off the fact that Libya is being developed merely for its military strategic importance. The British state that their reports show that the colonists in question are replacing those sent out in 1932, to develop sandy waste areas and who were forced to abandon them as commercial projects in spite of the support of Government funds. The British further believe that the greatest asset to Italy of each colonist will be his availability for military service.

Egypt.

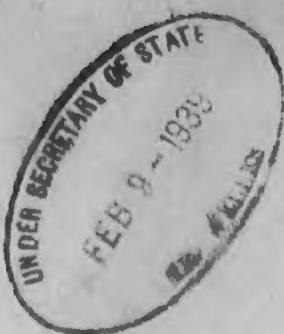
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9750.00*
Well informed British circles in Cairo feel that the Italian political aims are to destroy Great Britain's special position in Egypt by procuring the appointment of Italians to positions at the Royal Palace and securing the establishment of Egyptian cabinets friendly to Italy in the hope that some form of Italo-Egyptian agreement may be negotiated. An example of the intrigue carried on resulted in an incident recently over the appointment of a chief engineer for the royal palaces. It appears that the King's inner circle were bent on appointing an Italian

for

for that post while the Cabinet objected. According to good sources, the British Ambassador also expressed his objection to the King of the matter. However, the Italian was appointed.

The British look upon this incident and others of a similar nature which have recently occurred as a direct result of Italian intrigue. The British are of the opinion that the situation is fast developing to a point where there is a possibility of a complete break between the present Cabinet and the Royal circle such as that which resulted in the fall of the Cabinet of Nahas Pasha.

JAY WALKER



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

February

U - Mr. ~~SECRETARY OF STATE~~
S - The ~~SECRETARY OF STATE~~ 1939NOTE ON ACTIVITIES IN THE NEAR EAST

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41

Certain interesting confidential information has been given one of our officers in Cairo by a British Intelligence Officer concerning Italian activities in Ethiopia, Yemen, Libya and Egypt, which is embodied in the attached despatch of January 6, 1939 from our Legation in Cairo.

In Ethiopia, where the Italians are reported to have 35,000 white and 100,000 native troops, the Duke of Aosta has endeavored, as Viceroy, to mitigate the harshness of the Italian treatment of the natives. British reports indicate that however good the intentions of the Viceroy may be little practical progress has been made in stabilizing the administration of the country in the face of corruption, maladministration and lack of money to further the pacification of the country. Moreover, no progress has been made against the solid core of revolt in Gojjam and Amhara.

Delay in the pacification of the country is also said to be due to inadequate communications, to a hope that the rebel chiefs may be bought off and to an unwillingness to divert additional troops to Ethiopia during the present

uncertain

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uncertain international situation in Europe. The British do not believe the rebel chiefs may be bought off and anticipate further revolts in the course of this year.

The British are reported to be concerned regarding Italian activities in the Yemen, an independent state in southwestern Arabia, where Italian activities were very pronounced from about 1926 to 1938. One of the provisions of the Anglo-Italian Accord of April 16, 1938, to which the British attached no little importance was the joint Anglo-Italian recognition that it was in their common interest that neither they nor any other power should acquire sovereignty or any privileged position of a political character in Saudi Arabia or Yemen. It is now reported that a number of senior Italian officers are at present in Yemen on various missions and the British appear to be apprehensive that in the case of the death of the aged ruler of Yemen further attempts will be made by Italy to increase its influence in that country.

It is also reported that the Italians continue to maintain some 80,000 troops in Libya, including some 10,000 sent to Libya during the crisis in September 1938 and that these breaches of the Anglo-Italian Accord of April 16, 1938 have the close attention of the British Military Command in Egypt. In that connection, it may be recalled that

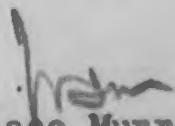
that in an exchange of notes coincident with the signature of that accord the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs assured the British Ambassador in Rome that Italian troops in Libya would be reduced at the rate of 1,000 weekly until they were brought to "peace strength". It was added that such withdrawals would ultimately constitute a diminution of such forces by not less than one-half the numbers present when the Anglo-Italian conversations commenced.

In November 1937 it was estimated that Italian troops in Libya numbered about 70,000 as a result of their increase by some 50,000 in that year. Their reduction to "peace strength", therefore, should have entailed the withdrawal of 50,000 troops unless the Italian Government may have reconsidered its estimate of the "peace strength" of such forces. Their reduction by half would have brought them to 35,000. It would appear from the present report from British sources in Cairo that the Libyan garrison, instead of being reduced, has actually been increased by 10,000 troops. Moreover, in a telegram dated February 7, 1939 from our Consul in Tunis, it is stated that two German army divisions are reported as having recently arrived in Libya. In a memorandum dated May 21, 1938, prepared in this Division at the time of the signature of the Anglo-Italian Accord of April 18, 1938, it was concluded:

"So

"So long, of course, as a large Italian force is maintained in Libya it must necessarily constitute a potential threat of considerable nuisance value to Italian strategic interests. That threat has been effective on two occasions (in 1935 at the time of the Ethiopian crisis and again in 1937). There is nothing in the new Accord which limits Italy's freedom of action to make the threat effective a third time."

The same despatch from Cairo reports also that Italy has been very active in Egypt in seeking to build up its position in that country at the expense of British interests by procuring the appointment of Italians to positions in the Royal Palace. Italian influence in Egypt was strongest under the late King Fuad who died in 1936. It would appear that Italy is seeking to regain the influence with the Palace which it enjoyed until interrupted by the death of the present King's father.


Wallace Murray



MEMORANDUM.

(Strictly Confidential)

10/20/38
J.W.

October 20, 1938.

Abyssinia.

Referring to the writer's memoranda prepared prior to his departure for the United States in May 1938, particular attention may be noted to the reference at that time to conditions in Abyssinia as reported from confidential British sources. Reports from the same sources in the early part of October 1938, indicated that during the summer months, when the rainy season prevailed, the general situation in Abyssinia came to a complete standstill. The Abyssinians held most of the territory outside such centres as Addis Ababa, Dessie, Harrar, etc. where the Italians had fortified themselves against surprise attacks. The British feel that the Italians were satisfied to control only whatever routes of communication were absolutely necessary for the protection of their forces. Reports indicate that there were exceptionally heavy rains in Abyssinia during the past summer months resulting in considerably more destruction of Italian property than anticipated, especially to parts of the newly constructed roads. The Abyssinians are also reported still holding large quantities of arms, the source of which my British informant was significantly not prepared to divulge. While the British in Cairo feel that there must be Italian plans under way to recapture their lost territory in the coming months, they were not prepared to discuss the matter in early October until they received further details from their sources of information in that area.

The Crisis.

The general plan in the Near East, partly carried out during the international crisis in September 1938, as reported by the British services in Cairo, is of interest in that it may afford some idea of what may take place should a similar crisis arise in the near future.

According to British sources, the general plan of defense in the Eastern Mediterranean in the past crisis provided that the Turkish forces be given freedom to attack the Italian bases in the Dodecanese Islands. The French were to move some of their fighting units into Palestine, while the British were to practically withdraw from there and use those forces against an expected attack on Egypt from Libya.

During the crisis, the British air forces in Egypt were temporarily increased to about 300 planes. Such additions included squadrons sent here from Iraq, Palestine, and Aden. A greater part of the air forces were stationed at Mersa Matruh on the coast -- about half way between Alexandria and the Libyan border. Two air squadrons were held at Luxor, in Upper Egypt, while other squadrons remained near Cairo, Alexandria, and the Suez Canal. The Egyptian border near the coastal zone facing Libya was heavily mined, although no attempt to forcibly contact the enemy was planned until his forces advanced as far as Mersa Matruh.

The British-Egyptian land forces in the Western area were increased to about 38,000 men. This number included regiments sent from Palestine for the emergency. The British naval forces at Alexandria at the time were increased

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OCT 20 1938

creased to some 52 naval ships.

The British report that during the crisis, the Italians increased their military strength in Libya by some ten thousand troops from Italy, and were known to have completed all details for mobile units to advance towards Egypt from bases at Tobruch and Bardia on the coast, as well as from the oasis of Giarabub in the interior. From their base at Cufra, which is some 500 miles inland near the Egyptian border, the Italian air forces were prepared to attack points on the Nile in Upper Egypt, probably with a view to destroying the railway line connecting Upper and Lower Egypt.

After the crisis, about two divisions of British troops were withdrawn from Egypt and sent to Palestine. The additional air squadrons were returned to their posts in the Near East.

The British services in Cairo are now of the opinion, which apparently is based on advice from London, that the Italian menace to Egypt has slightly relaxed and that for some time Italian propaganda and efforts will be concentrated on Tunisia, despite the terms of the Franco-Italian Agreement of January 1935. Recent press reports regarding revived Italian claims for Tunisia would appear to verify this opinion.

The Italian Colony.

It is estimated by reliable sources that there are about 58,000 Italian subjects living in Egypt, of whom probably 12,500 are believed by the British to be eligible for military service.

During the recent crisis, the Italian Consuls are understood to have issued instructions to many of their male residents of the procedure to follow in order to leave Egypt and join the colors in Italy. The British rather openly indicated that they were prepared to send boat loads of Italian women and children to points in Libya rather than leave them in this country to be protected and fed. Plans were also drawn up by the Egyptians providing for concentration camps for some ten thousand Italians and five or six hundred Germans. The British report that it was intended to place the concentration camps near certain areas in this country where there are large tanks of oil supplies, as possible protection against air bombing of their oil reserves.

The writer noted that prominent Italians in this city who are known to be enthusiastic Fascist party members were appearing in public places without the Party insignia on their coat lapels.

Italian Jews.

It is known that the Italian Jews in Egypt have been an important class in the Italian colony. In the past, many Jews have been ardent members of the local Fascist organizations, and liberal financial supporters of Party activities. Jews have held the highest positions in Egyptian branches of Italian banks, insurance companies, travel agencies, and other Government-controlled concerns, and their position in the Italian colony has been such that one good source reports that probably seventy per cent. of the Italian wealth in Egypt was under control of their Jewish nationals.

The present anti-Semitic campaign in Italy has had certain noticeable repercussions locally. Italian-owned concerns

concerns began dismissing their Jewish employees and it is stated that after publicity of this fact in a local newspaper, the Jewish-controled firms began to retaliate by dismissing Italian employees. A large percentage of the members of the Italian Club in Cairo were Jewish, and reports are to the effect that about 40 of them have resigned, while many others have merely failed to attend. Local Jews are understood to be boycotting travel on Italian steamers and withdrawing their accounts and business from the local branches of the Italian banks.

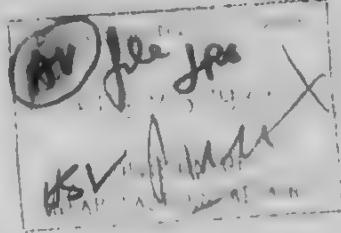
Jay Walker.

NO. 10.

RE: **AMERICAN CONSULATE**
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1939 FEB 24 Aden, Arabia, February 7, 1939.
PM 12 08

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
- P. R. W.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE



SUBJECT: Political Situation at Djibouti.

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FOR DISSEMINATION - 100K YEF 27

TO C.R.D. Field



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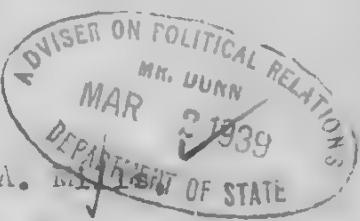
M. J. DUNN

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

LM
WASHINGTON

SIR:

MAR 3 1939



I have the honor to report that James A. M. Lills, Associated Press correspondent, passed through Aden on February 4, 1939, en route from Djibouti to Jerusalem, and made a few statements which may be of interest to the Department.

Mr. Lills was sent to Djibouti to cover an Italian-French outbreak which never materialized. After two weeks waiting and garnering no information not available in Paris or London, he returned to Jerusalem, where he is following the Jewish-Arab conflict. He said that the Italian boycott of Djibouti was effective and complete. No Italian is permitted to use the French-owned railroad from the coast to Addis Ababa, and a highway has been finished between Addis Ababa and Massawa where lorry traffic is in operation (at a considerably greater cost than use of the expensive French railway). Both Massawa and Lo Radisio are used as ports with Italian ships calling there regularly, and the

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
RE: 1055

MAR - 3 1939

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British port of Berbera is being patronized instead of Djibouti. The result financially and economically is that the traders of that city are doing little business other than currency smuggling, and are planning to move elsewhere. The business with Abyssinia is now a complete Italian monopoly.

Politically, the French officials in Djibouti expect help from the British here in Aden, both by water and in the air. This is a fond hope, and shows clearly they are not informed on the British military strength. There are only 41 air ships at the field of which 21 are in service, and three sloops now in this area. Mr. Mills stated that the French maintained 3000 Senegalese troops at the present time and were in the process of building that force up to 10000, which strength they believed would prove adequate to withstand an attack by land.

Respectfully yours,

Donald C. Dunham

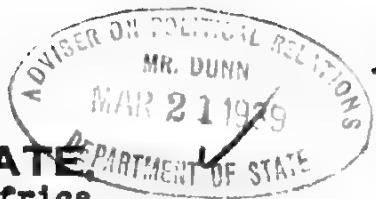
Donald C. Dunham
American Vice Consul

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NO. 186

AMERICAN CONSULATE
Nairobi, Colony of Kenya, Africa,
January 30, 1939.



SUBJECT: Jubaland.
2-3000 GPO

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASHINGTON.

SIR:

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AND RECORDS

WASHINGTON.

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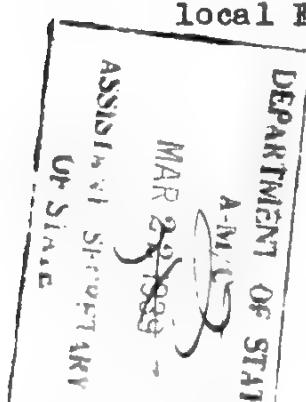
I have the honor to refer to this office's despatch No. 176 dated January 12, 1939 entitled "Jubaland". Referring to this and other similar articles, there has just appeared the following item in the local East African Standard.

"GERMANS IN JUBALAND"
An Official Italian Denial

"Under the heading "Germans in Jubaland" or something like that, there have repeatedly been reported in the local press news of Germans having settled in Italian Somaliland (Jubaland) disguised as colonists, who, instead, appear to be military men busy on military work and objectives.

The Royal Italian Consul General in Nairobi denies any truth in such baseless rumours and states that there are no Germans in any part of the Jubaland territory.'

There



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There is in Mombasa an American citizen, Benjamin Lepow, who has lived and traveled extensively in Abyssinia, and now maintains connections with various parts of the country in carrying on his business of collecting leopard skins for shipment to the United States. Knowing that he has connections with Kismayu, I wrote him, enclosing the clipping referred to in my despatch of January 12, 1939, asking him if he, through his connections had any information. The pertinent parts of his letter read as follows:

" On receipt of your letter I called to see an Indian who arrived here from Somaliland on the 11th, and here is what he tells me.

In July 1938 the Governor H.E. Carroseli arrived in Kisimaio. With him came a few high officials, believed to be Germans, and after a few days at Kisimaio the officials left for Ras Chiambone (formerly called Dicks Head). They told some Indians that they are going there to fish.

Some time in Aug. these people returned to Kisimaio. The Indians were told that the Governor granted them the right to fish and cut the forest for Mangrove poles and Mangrove bark, at Dicks Head, and they asked for 5000 natives from the D.C. (District Commissioner).

Good Gosha natives are hard to get now in Jubaland as those who were called upon when the war broke out did not return, and the few that remained were forced to go to Genali to work on the Banana farms. Any way D.C. got together about a 1000 of the best Somali natives and told them that they were to leave for Dicks Head, as

they

they were required there to do some special work. But the Somalis knew that there is no fresh drinking water and frightened that the steamer may not get them water in time, on the way they disappeared, probably in to Kenya. Only a few arrived there but were returned to Kisimaio shortly after as they were not able to work there on account of malaria.

In Dec. a few 1000 Triestinas (possibly Germans) arrived at Kisimaio. The Governor came down with some very high officials (so says my Indian) and shortly after that they started to dig a canal from the Juba River to the wells of Afmadu. The digging started at Mana Mofi, about 12 miles N. of the Equator. They are also making a Port at Kisimaio, and closing up the broken banks of the river, so that the sea water cannot get in to the river. All the work is done by Italians. No Indian can come near enough to speak to them. For this reason he cannot say for sure what they really are, Italians or Germans.

The Juba River is navigable only six months a year, from June to Dec. and there is a fall at Bardera of almost 200 feet, and no flat bottom boat can pass to Dolo, as the paper said, but they have quite good roads on both sides of the river as far as Luch, 150 miles N. of Dolo.

It is possible that the paper means Ras Hafun, as the Indian says that from Cape of Guardofui to Ras Hafun is all fortified. There is also an Air Base, and quite a number of men are stationed there, all whites.

In 1932 I went to Dicks Head to see if we could start fishing for sharks, as at that time America wanted Shark skins at any price, and here is my report to New York after 20 days at that place.

The harbor is a natural beauty, sharks by the millions. The forest looks like a paradise. The only trouble is no water, and every mosquito bite is just like a bullet, and the heat is unbearable.

There is a small spring but it dries up in the dry season, native Dhows call there sometimes, but very seldom.

Shortly after I came back marshal Bogdolio went to Dicks Head for some special work. After 90 days he was returned, but was completely mad, they sent him home to some lune (looney?) hospital. In 1934 Dr. Benardelo was transferred to Dicks Head, and he too came back mad. After that the Italians refused to have any white man go there."

It is not without the realm of possibility that Italians from Trieste, which was of course formerly Austrian, might be mistaken for Germans. In any event, there is some activity at Kisimayu, details of which are being guarded.

Respectfully yours,



E. Talbot Smith
American Consul

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Original and four copies
to Department of State



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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

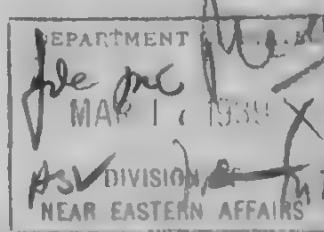
Cairo, February 15, 1939

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DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

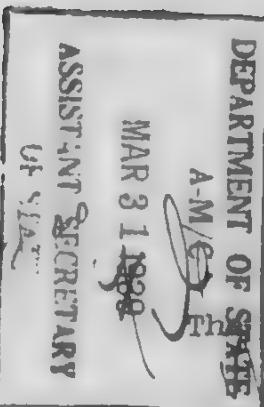


Subject: Sidelights on the Existing Situation at Djibouti and in Ethiopia.

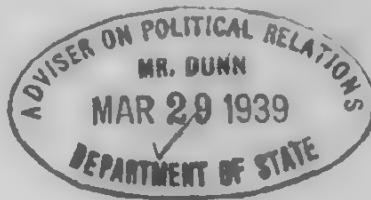
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TRADE AGREEMENTS
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MAR 28 1939

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 24 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE



Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.



Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that Mr. James A. Mills, Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press, called at the Legation this morning and in the course of our informal talk he told me certain things with regard to Djibouti and Ethiopia which he had learned on a recent visit to French Somaliland.

Mr.

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Mr. Mills said that Djibouti is absolutely dead owing to the boycott conducted by the Italians against the railroad between that port and Addis Ababa. Recently, however, there was a brief spurt of activity when the Italian authorities shipped flour by the railway to the interior of Ethiopia. The fact of this shipment argues that Italy has been unable to pacify Ethiopia and to render it productive to any appreciable extent, as it would also argue an urgent need.

Mr. Mills said that according to what he heard in Djibouti, Italy was now little if any further forward in the pacification of Ethiopia than she had been hitherto. It appears that no Italian is safe, without suitable armed escort, more than two miles from Addis Ababa.

The French in Djibouti, according to the correspondent, were tremendously heartened by reports to the effect the President regarded the French frontier as the frontier of the United States. Although those reports were without foundation, their psychological effect was as great as though the words had been uttered.

I may add that my experience has been precisely the same in Cairo, both Prince Mohamed Aly and the British Ambassador, as well as many others, having told me that the effect of the words reported to have been uttered by the President was and remains very great, and that the subsequent denial has done little to attenuate that effect.

Mr. Mills was also informed that only one American

institution,

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institution, the Lambie Hospital, where a few Americans were working, still remained in Ethiopia.

Respectfully yours,


Bert Fish

In triplicate.
file no. 800
GPM/BF/icg

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No. 205

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Nairobi, Colony of Kenya, Africa,
March 13, 1939.

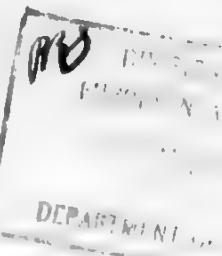


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AND RECORDS

Subject:

2-2000 GPO



THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to this office's despatches No. 176 dated January 12, 1939 and No. 186 dated January 30, 1939, both entitled "Jubaland" and both bearing File No. 800.

The chief of the local Criminal Investigation Department informs me this morning that he had sent a man to Kismayo, Italian Somaliland, solely for the purpose of discovering whether there was any truth in the rumors of the presence of Germans at that port. This man has just returned and reports that there are absolutely no Germans there.

I asked him if his agent had found that a naval base or submarine base was being constructed at Kismayo, but he stated that he had reported nothing on that subject!

We

865D.00/46

We are therefore as much in the dark as before as to what is going on at Kisimaio. My only consolation is that the local British authorities, who should be much more interested than we are, are likewise ignorant of what is going on. It is said that there were six or eight bombing planes at Kisimaio during the September "Munich Crisis", ready to leave for Mombasa, - only two hours away by air. It is, therefore, logical to suppose that the Italians are at least constructing or improving an air base, and it is possible that they are also making a submarine base.

Respectfully yours,



E. Talbot Smith
American Consul

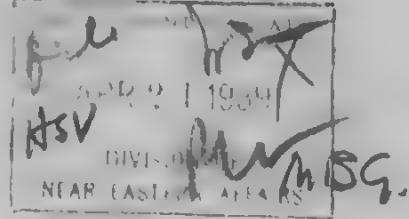
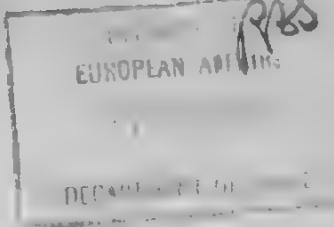
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to Department of State

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1939 APR 20 PM 1 32

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SUBJECT: Activities at Kismaio.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

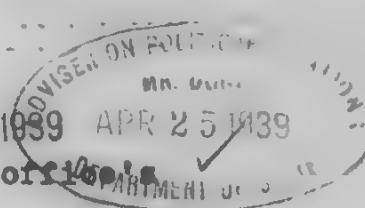
I have the honor to refer to this office's despatch No. 203 dated March 13, 1939, entitled "Jubaland" and to report further that I have myself interviewed the individual who spent some time at Kismaio for the local Criminal Investigation Department. He reports that the Italians are constructing a weir or dam across the mouth of the Juba River at Kismaio. This, he reports, will make the river navigable for some miles and will stop the tidal waters backing up the river as they have done in the past. This construction would be normal, if a submarine base were anticipated, but to date no other construction has been undertaken that would lead one to believe that such a base were under way.

The man, a Mr. Tarlton, who went up collects snakes for museums and zoos and used this as his

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OF STATE

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APR 26 1939



WIRELESS
TELEGRAM

865D.00/47

REASON

reason for being there.

Respectfully yours,



E. Talbot Smith
American Consul



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DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865c.20/43 FOR #1586

FROM Egypt (Fish) DATED Mar. 25, 1939

REGARDING: Situation in Ethiopia.

Encloses memorandum by Vice Consul Walker, a portion of which concerns -.

103

8650.00 / 48

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865d.51/17 FOR Despatch #1481

FROM Italy (Reed) DATED May 18, 1939
TO NAME I 1127 ...

REGARDING:

Budget estimates for Italian Africa quoted; transmits detailed summaries of budgets of Libya and East Africa. Comments on items therein.

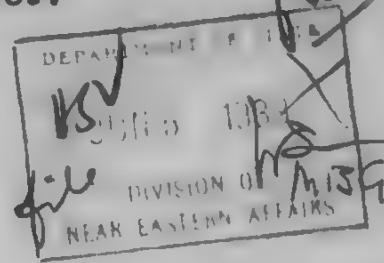
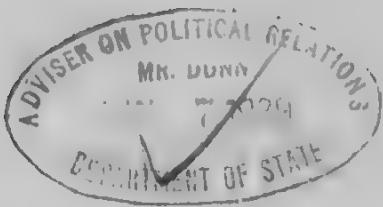
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AMERICAN CONSULATE,
Nairobi, Colony of Kenya, Africa
May 3, 1939.



SUBJECT: Conditions in Abyssinia.

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Commercial Office (A-M/C)

To *Aden*

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FOR DISTRIBUITION - MARK

To the field

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE, "Concurred - Aden"

WASHINGTON.

JUN 9 1939

I have the honor to enclose an article entitled
"Englishwoman in Abyssinia" by Mrs. Katharine Fannin,
which appeared in two sections of the local "Sunday
Post".

Mrs. Fannin is the wife of Mr. Charles Gower
Fannin, M.C. the Chief Surveyor of the local Govern-
ment Lands and Settlement Department. She spent
three months in Abyssinia, and was the guest of the
Duke d'Aosta while at Addis Ababa. I have made in-
quiry, discreetly to find out how the wife of a minor
official was so royally treated on her visit and find
that for months she used every influence both through
local Government officials and through friends in
Italy to assure her cordial welcome and the Italians
outdid themselves to show her a good time. She told

AMERICAN CONSULATE
OF STATE

SIR:

865D.00/50

JUL 15 1939

FILE

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me that when she asked for her hotel bill at towns where she stopped, she was always informed that there was no bill, she was the guest of the Duke d'Aosta.

While I am not in a position to confirm or deny any particular allegations in her story, I am informed that conditions are not at all as good as her story would lead one to believe. For example, she states in her first article that she motored "in complete safety and unescorted over the whole 7,000 miles except for one small bit". Mr. Jean Walker, an American stationed at Nairobi representing the Caterpillar Tractor Company, informs me that recently he contemplated a motor trip to Abyssinia on the business of his firm, and was informed by the local Italian Consulate that he would have to wait at the Kenya-Abyssinian border for a military escort, as it was dangerous and prohibited to travel without one.

Mrs. Fannin showed me a number of her photographs, chiefly of roads and bridges, which confirmed her report regarding the excellence of the roads.

The East African Standard (Nairobi) recently published a short note on conditions in Abyssinia, the writer stating as follows:

" During the past 10 days I have spoken to three men who have recently visited Abyssinia and their impressions conflicted in many

particulars.

particulars. Undoubtedly the Italians have done a great deal in Abyssinia, but the balance of evidence suggests that their control over vast areas of the country is extremely tenuous. The Spectator is publishing a series of interesting articles by Mr. George Steer, the well-known journalist who was recently in Kenya. Mr. Steer states that:-

'In Ethiopia today the philo-Fascist is welcomed. He travels at speed down the military roads, or conquers the more intractable miles of the plateau in an Italian aeroplane. Central Amharic Ethiopia is unknown to him; as vast areas of it are unknown to the White men whose sovereignty over the whole has been recognised by England. Amharic Ethiopia is an Italian x today, because Italy has not conquered nor administers it.'

Mr. Steer alleges that the vast Ankober, Gojjam, and Ambo districts are still in revolt and in no sense of the word under Italian control. I cannot tell you whether that is true or not and I doubt if any visitor can do so. But I cannot understand why Italy requires an army of 200,000 men and 200 war-planes in Abyssinia. Their presence suggests either that Abyssinia is still unconquered, or that Italy has a covetous eye on some neighbouring land."

Mr. Steer's comments, however, must be taken with a large grain of salt as I am informed that he never left the sea coast and has written his articles almost entirely on hearsay.

The Sunday Post, Nairobi, recently published a short article reading as follows:

" ABYSSINIAN GUERRILLA BANDS
HARASS ITALIANS

Guerrilla bands are causing increasing anxiety to the Italian rulers in Abyssinia, according to reports reaching Ethiopian exiles in Jerusalem and Cairo.

Only recently eight Italian soldiers and an officer were ambushed and killed in a mountain pass 14 miles from Addis Ababa.

This massacre followed five days after the execution by the Italians of 90 Ethiopians suspected of belonging to guerrilla bands.

These reports come from men who formerly held responsible positions in the Ethiopian Army.

While the bands have few machine-guns they claim to possess plenty of rifles. One report sets the number at between 500,000 and 600,000 and 20,000 are said to be almost new, imported shortly before the capture of Addis Ababa.

On Military Lines

The exact number of guerrillas is not stated, but the size of bands is said to vary between 500 and 10,000. During certain months of the year when agricultural work is at a low level some are increased to 13,000 or 14,000. Each is organised on military lines and under a single commander, usually a high officer in the former army.

Each band levies taxes in its own district and in some parts, particularly in the Shoa and Gojam districts, have become so powerful as to be virtually in complete control.

Italian attempts to form a colonial corps have met with limited success. The guerrillas encourage villagers to enrol believing that the recruits will

later

later go over to the bands. But the Italians are not yet sure of the reliability of the Ethiopians, even for minor police work.

Though nearly three years have passed since the end of the war Italy still maintains 200,000 troops and 400 aeroplanes in Ethiopia."

I asked the editor of the paper what the source of his information was, and he replied that it was a reprint from articles appearing in London's "Telegraph" and "Referee". I pass it on for what it may be worth, as I cannot confirm the allegations made.

Respectfully yours,



E. Talbot Smith
American Consul

✓

Enclosure:

No. 1. Newspaper article (2 sections)

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ENGLISHWOMAN IN
ABYSSINIA

By Katharine Fannin.

I have just returned to Kenya after very nearly three months spent in travelling about Italian East Africa in general, and Abyssinia in particular, during which time I was able to see for myself a little of the present state of affairs there.

On looking at the rough sketch map it will be seen that I motored from Mogadiscio via Harar, Addis Ababa and Asmara to the Red Sea port of Massaua (not Jibuti).

On my return journey I drove through the fantastic mountain country of the Semien to Gondar and Lake Tana and back to Asmara; did various trips in Eritrea; then motored to Addis, exploring that neighbourhood fairly thoroughly for forty miles or so round about.

Afterwards I went by car from Addis across the weird and terrific Danakil country to Assab on the Red Sea, and back, also by car, to Addis, about twelve hundred miles.

Finally, I drove down past the exquisite chain of lakes south of Addis to Neghelli, and thence keeping roughly parallel with our Kenya frontier to Dolo and Lugh Ferrandi. I had meant to follow the track down the river Juba to Kismayu; but it was too sandy, and as I did not want to risk being stuck by myself for days—very few people pass that way—I drove to Mogadiscio and thence by the coast road via Gelib and Margherita to Kismayu where I took ship for Mombasa.

In all I motored rather more than 7,020 miles on Italian-built roads and tracks. Of the 7,000, roughly 8,000 miles were tarmac racing tracks as good as anything in Europe; 2,000 were fair to good stone-ballasted all-weather roads in process of being asphalted; and 2,000 were unfinished tracks crossing every sort of country from water jumps and deep sand to lava boulders where the going was so awful I kept saying to myself "Nothing can be worse than this" and it was—every time! I even found myself envying that fortunate (if obscure) being the "Philofascist" who "travels at speed down the military roads, or conquers the more intractable miles of the plateau in an Italian aeroplane" (so Mr. G. Steer tells us in his instructive but unfortunate not very convincing article in "The Spectator").

I travelled in complete safety and unescorted over the whole 7,000 miles except for one small bit between the river Tacazzé and Gondar, with the exception of a Somali "boy" to act as interpreter for part of the time, and for part, an Italian civilian driver lent to give me a hand in lonely bits of country where a car breakdown would have been tiresome though not dangerous, I was alone, and I did not even travel in company with a second car. These facts speak for themselves.

Since my return many people have asked me "Weren't the Italians frightfully sticky?" Were allowed to see anything?" Were it very dangerous—I bet you kept your revolver handy?" "Of

whole count,

of rebels, isn't it?" Well, the answers are, that far from being sticky, from the minute I landed (knowing nobody and speaking no Italian) I met with the most wonderful kindness and generous hospitality (of the same brand on which we in Kenya pride ourselves). People seemed to go out of their way to make me feel welcome, to help me at every turn and to say friendly things about England and the English. I was free to do what I liked, go where I liked and to see everything I wished—good or bad. And—which may surprise you as much as

confined to a small area and to disorganized stock-thefting and petty pilfering. Roads, administrative posts and hospitals are being built in there now and each month sees a diminution in the lawlessness.

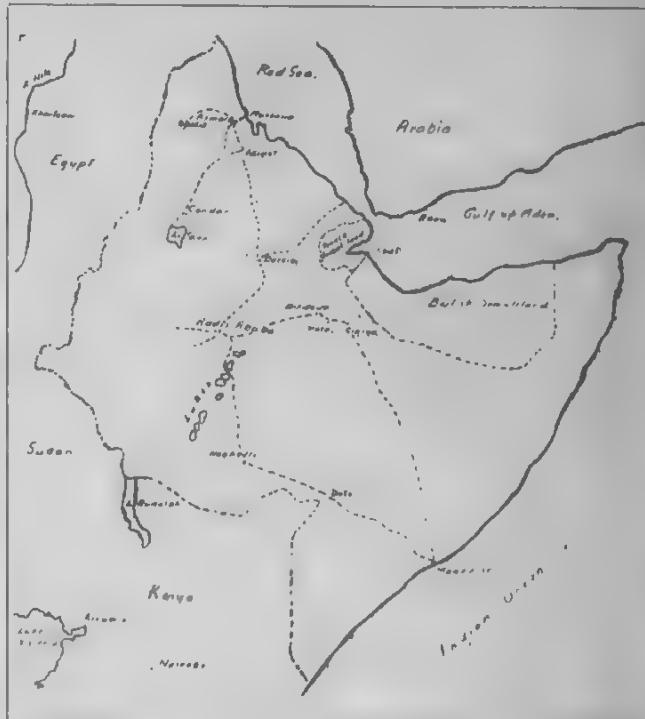
The rubbish that appears in the home Press on the subject of Abyssinia is almost past belief. The vast majority of the natives of Abyssinia are only too glad to have peace, an impartial central government, roads, ungrudging medical aid for any man, woman or child

children. I saw large numbers of the latter and they seemed a healthy-looking lot. And finally: an enormous proportion of the men are not as is so often and so incorrectly stated, soldiers; they are in fact employed on road-making, building, digging wells, driving the 40,000 lorries that take the place of rail traffic in Italian East Africa, and on the thousand other jobs to be done in a new Colony where it struck me that everybody was working at full pressure to get it going, and to make it an asset to Italy.

Kenya Co-operative
Creamery, Limited.

Turnover for March

1. Butterfat Supplies	122,253 lbs.
2. Butter Manufactured	142,443 lbs.
3. Export Only	66,041 lbs.
4. Local Sales	76,422 lbs.
5. Payout, Gross 1st Grade	1/- per lb.
6. Total Amount paid out, including Milk	Shs. 125,396/-
New Zealand 1st Grade Butter:	
Prices in London:—	
7. Average	116/- per cwt.
8. Lowest	115/- per cwt.
9. Highest	117/- per cwt.



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All of which, if rather obscurely, leads up to the fact that the Italians are masters of the country, and it would be dishonest for any one like me, if who has had an opportunity to go through Abyssinia and to see at first hand the

achieved there, to do anything but say so quite plainly and clearly. Everyone knows there is banality in the Gojjam. But it is

who needs it, new water supplies, and freedom to go in security about their daily lives in exchange for the slavery, battle, murder and sudden death, extortions and misrule by petty chiefs, and general lack of medical facilities, roads and all other social amenities which obtained up to the time of the Italian occupation.

If anyone thinks this is an overstatement I refer him (or her) to every writer, priest, missionary, consul, hunter, trader, traveller, soldier, of all nationalities whose books from the 16th century to this decade speak unambiguously of such horrors observed by their authors.

Next week I will try to give an account of what I actually saw in the way of settlement schemes, action; experimental farms, hospital and leper work, and so on.

This week I will conclude by mentioning that there are now about 300,000 (three hundred thousand—in case the printer makes a mistake!) Italians—men, women and children in Italian East Africa, of whom roughly 200,000 are in Abyssinia itself. At Gondar right in the middle of the alleged "bandit" area there are

already 6,000 Italian civilians of whom 1,200 are women and littl

I direct this letter to you with the most hearty request to aid me by inserting an article in your News-Paper.

I am 18 aged and I wish likely to help my parents, who are still despaired. We are Austrians and had lived many years in the occupied Sudetenland. Now we are in Yugoslavia, because we had not received the permit of residence in the Czechoslovakia. As the Germans have stolen now the whole Czechoslovakia my parents have lost all her lost money. Please write an article in your News-Paper we wish to work much as my father does or whatever it may be. I am still knowing all the domestic work, my mother is an excellent cook and my father knows all the work, what may be used as there is varnishing, small repairs of the electric light, also gardening working. He speaks and writes English.

Oh, please, please help us, we shall pay back all your expenses till we shall earn and give us a new home. We never shall forget your aid.

I will wait for your answer daily.

MURTHE MOCAN
Split, Glacava 8,
Yugoslavia

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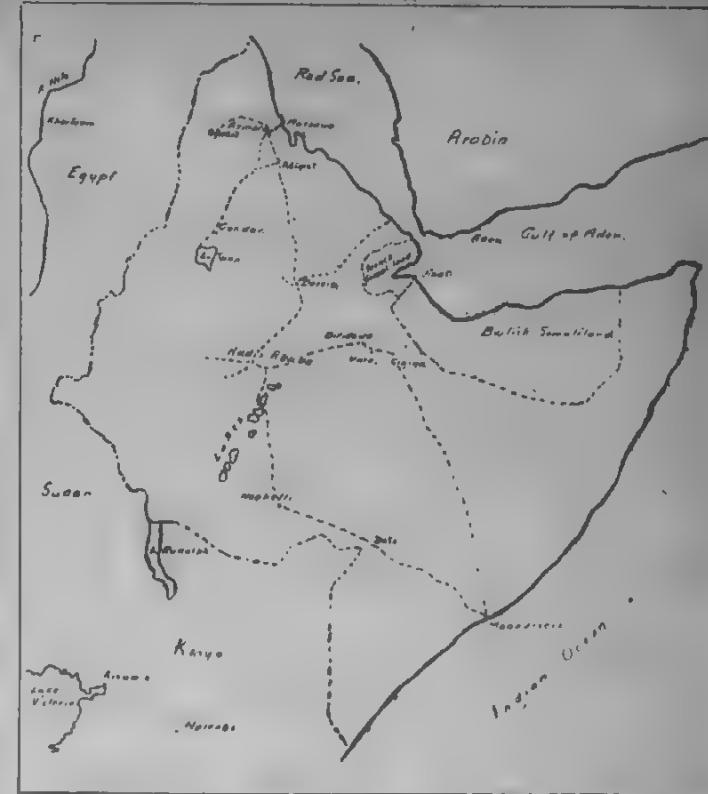
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Appeasement—The Other Side

(A Letter to the *News Chronicle*)

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MARTHE MOGAN
Split, Glicerijeva 8,
Yugoslavia.



SUPER INDIA TYRES

INDIA

THE FINEST TYRES MADE



SUPER INDIA TYRES

Sunday Post Competitions

Here are the howlers, sent in for competition, and a very good list they are too:

Drake was playing bowls on Plymouth Sound when a messenger rushed to tell him that the Spanish Armada was in sight. Drake turned and said the Spaniards can wait but my bowls cannot.

An isosceles triangle is a line on a map joining places with equal weather.

Queen Elizabeth had two children, Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII. When the King of Spain wanted to marry her, she said, 'No, Sire, I prefer to remain a virgin queen.'

Alexander the Great was born in the absence of his parents.

H.M.L.

Socrates is the prime minister of Greece.

1066—The Norman Conquest.

Mussolini is a special type of Macaroni. Florence Nightingale never had any rest, as she was always kneaded by the soldiers.

In the time of the Great Plague, 'ba-bea corps' was always called out by undertakers. It meant, 'bring out your dead.'

Herrings go about the sea in shawls.

"M.A.C."

A pessimist is a man who is never happy unless he is unhappy and even then he is not happy.

The Mediterranean and the Red Sea are connected by the Suez Canal.

To court disaster is to get engaged.

A Harem is a hutch for keeping hares in.

The Pope lives in the vacuum.

"Saucy."

Here is a single item sent in, apparently not for competition by "Fan":

A Papal Bull is a bull kept at the Vatican to provide milk for the Pope's children.

The Giraffe needs a long neck because its head is so far away from its body.

The inside of a fowl is called a blizzard.

Days are longer in summer than winter because heat expands everything.

A Parable is a heavenly story with no earthly meaning.

W.E.L.

Pompeii was destroyed by an overflow of saliva from the Vatican.

When you stroke a cat the wrong way, that is by rubbing your hand along its back, it cocks up its tail like a ruler so you can't get no further.

A Cul-De-Sac is a bag of coal in French.

The Romans made their roads straight so that the Britons could not hide round the corners.

The sun never sets on the British Empire because the British Empire is in the East and the sun sets in the west.

Barberians are things put into bicycles to make them run smoothly.

W.H.L.

Adam and Eve were very happy in the Garden of Eden until the servant came.

A black tie is worn as a sign of mourning, but a coloured one can be worn at night.

Ladies always take tea in their hats.

A lion is a wild animal, very proud of its mane.

"Faux pas" means "pass the forks".

Dinahell was the first British statesman to become a film star.

"The eternal triangle" is a saying invented by Euclid meaning that there are three sides to every question.

Another well known saying of Euclid was "A line is length without breadth."

A Secretary Bird is a lady typist.

A Tick Bird is a woman who never pays for things.

A jackal is a thing for raising motor car wheels off the ground.

The Sunday Post is the one that is usually knocked down, by passing motorists, in the early hours.

"Mal de mer" is French for "It is bad manners to reach."

Old and Bold.

The King's pardon is what people apply for if they have triplets.

A baronet is a lady baron.

The leopard has black spots which look like round sores on its body; those who catch the sores get leprosy.

Clock is masculine. The feminine is watch.

Rhombants go in braces.

Charles the first died of excitement because he lost his head.

"Scholar."

Navigators are what navvies wear round their trouser legs to keep the rats from running up, they are generally of leather.

The Diet of Worms is what Henry the Eighth was supposed to live on, he died however of a surfeit of lampoons as he was too short-sighted to tell the difference.

Hope and Co.

Aden is at the bottom of the Red Sea. The crocodile does not lay its own eggs. Absalom was caught by his hair on a tree and when he fell they picked up twelve baskets of fragments.

Everybody ought to learn to swim because then if a person is drowned he can save his life.

Julius Caesar entered Rome wearing a coral reef.

Mermaid is the wife of Mand-Lord.

"Duffer."

Tissue is an explosive cough.

Bachelor is a thing girls play games with.

W.R.B.

A blunderbus is a vehicle for conveying spinsters to the Maternity Home.

Contralto is a few kind of music sung by ladies.

Define the Elements: Salt, Mustard, Vinegar, Pepper.

"A.H.I."

Howlers: Collection from Kenya Schools.

At the Njore Air Rally, we saw male planes, but the R.A.F. had the other

On Sports day, all went well until H.E. the Governor arrived.

The first white people in East Africa were traders, but the missionaries helped them to make their homes here, and so increased the population enormously.

"Rift Valley."

Competitors will notice that not all the howlers that were sent in have been printed. Consideration has been accorded to the susceptibilities of our readers but entrants may rest assured that the censored items have raised a good laugh in this office! The prize, nevertheless, can only be given for those printed and we have decided this week to give it to W.E.L.

Future Competition

Film Titles.

Hollywood seems very keen on filming Shakespeare lately. However, his antiquated and rather dull titles will surely never lure audiences into cinemas. Film fans like their screen titles red hot. For an instance, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" might have been better box-office if it had been called "A Hot Night in a Wood"; or Julius Caesar. "Death of a Dictator." We will give a prize for the best alternative American title for a film of one of Shakespeare's plays. Entries should reach this office by April 27th.

Try and think, for instance, for a new name for the screen version of Macbeth, and also one for that thriller of revenge and gangsters in water-logged Venice, Othello.

Film Criticisms

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... should reach this office by

Bond Street

Marriage Mart

Two Young Women's Enterprise

Two modern young women with a desire to "do something different" are to open a business as marriage brokers in Bond-street, London.

For 30 guineas they will offer to put shy spinsters in touch with lonely bachelors and see them happily wed.

The brains behind the scheme is 25-years-old Mary Oliver, brunette daughter of a country parson, who has at last won the paternal assistance of the London County Council Public Control Department.

Last year they refused to license her as a marriage broker. This year they have promised to let her carry out her project for at least twelve months.

Her partner, Heather Jones, an outstanding good-looking blonde, also 25, told me of their plans. She is the only daughter of a brigadier-general.

The Charges.

I found her standing on the top of a ladder in slacks on the top floor of premises in New Bond-street painting bright yellow the four walls of a tiny room.

"Mary and I believe the people who cannot find husbands or wives for themselves want more personal attention than they can at present receive," she said.

"We shall charge 5 gns. to register each client, but that isn't much really. You see we shall have to know all about them — their birth, education, hobbies, interests, religion, looks, capabilities — everything in fact that the person who is going to marry them will want to know.

"Clients will undertake to pay us 20 gns. on marriage."

Making Contracts.

The bureau will work like this, Miss A. will arrive and tell either Mary or Heather all about her loneliness and her inability to find herself a husband. All the information in her favour and all against will be filed away for future reference.

When Mr. B. comes along and seems to want a wife just like Miss A. Heather or Mary will give him all the particulars about her they think he ought to know, and along he will go to pay court.

Should he decide Miss A. is not quite his "cup of tea" back he can go to the bureau for another selection, all for the same 5 gns.

Cow's 18½ Tons of Milk in a Year

Cherry, the non-pedigree dairy shorthorn which recently became the first cow to yield 4,000 gallons in a year, has now completed her recorded 365 days of milking.

Averaging 16 gallons 3 pints of milk a day, her total of 41,644½ lb. (over 18½ tons) is 3,038½ lb. more than the previous world record held by a pedigree American cow.

Last Thursday agricultural men from the West of England feted Cherry at Red House Farm, Amesbury, Wiltshire, where she is owned by Messrs. Wootton and Way.

Just Arrived

Special offer

Physic & Physique

The daily dozen is not enough. You'll never remedy a lack of nourishment by touching your toes, you'll never cure a headache by turning cartwheels. There are times when even the strongest person is apt to suffer from the strain of modern times. For this reason

Boots

the Chemists

MAKE A SPECIAL POINT OF PROVIDING A COMPLETE CHOICE OF RELIABLE TONICS, RESTORATIVES, LAXATIVES AND ALL THE DAILY ACCESSORIES TO HEALTH AT REASONABLE PRICES.

Boots

virgin queen.

Alexander the Great was born in the absence of his parents.

H.M.L.

Socrates is the prime minister of Greece.

1066—The Norman Conquest.

Mussolini is a special type of Macaroni. Florence Nightingale never had any rest, as she was always kneaded by the soldiers.

In the time of the Great Plague, 'habeas corpus' was always called out by undertakers. It meant, 'bring out your dead.'

Herrings go about the sea in shawls.

"M.A.C."

A pessimist is a man who is never happy unless he is unhappy and even then he is not happy.

The Mediterranean and the Red Sea are connected by the Suez Canal.

To court disaster is to get engaged.

A Harem is a hutch for keeping hares in.

The Pope lives in the vacuum.

"Saucy."

Here is a single item sent in, apparently not for competition by "Fan":

A Papal Bull is a ball kept at the Vatican to provide milk for the Pope's children.

The Giraffe needs a long neck because its head is so far away from its body.

The inside of a fowl is called a blizzard.

Days are longer in summer than winter because heat expands everything.

A Parable is a heavenly story with no earthly meaning.

W.E.L.

to make them run smoothly.

W.E.L.

Adam and Eve were very happy in the Garden of Eden until the servant came.

A black tie is worn as a sign of mourning, but a coloured one can be worn at night.

Ladies always take tea in their hats. A Lion is a wild animal, very proud of its mane.

"Faux pas" means "pass the forks". Disraeli was the first British statesman to become a film star.

"The eternal triangle" is a saying invented by Euclid meaning that there are three sides to every question.

Another well known saying of Euclid was "A line is length without breadth."

A Secretary Bird is a lady typist.

A Tick Bird is a woman who never pays for things.

A Jackal is a thing for raising motor car wheels off the ground.

The Sunday Post is the one that is usually knocked down, by passing motorists, in the early hours.

"Mal de mer" is French for "It is bad manners to reach."

Old and Bold.

The King's pardon is what people apply for if they have triplets.

A baronet is a lady baron.

The leopard has black spots which look like round soars on its body; those who catch the soars get leprosy.

Clock is masculine. The feminine is watch.

Peasants go in braces.

Charles the first died of excitement because he lost his head.

"Scholar."

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HEALTH AT

Reasonable Prices.

Boots

"CHEMISTS TO THE NATION"

1860—1939.

Answers to our expressiveough.

Bachelor is a thing girls play games with.

W.R.B.

A blunderbus is a vehicle for conveying spinsters to the Maternity Home.

Contralto is a low kind of music sung by ladies.

Define, the Elements: Salt, Mustard, Vinegar, Pepper.

"A.H.I."

Howlers: Collection from Kenya Schools.

At the Njoro Air Rally, we saw male planes, but the R.A.F. had the other

planes.

On Sports day, all went well until H. E. the Governor arrived.

The first white people in East Africa were traders, but the missionaries helped them to make their homes here, and so increased the population enormously.

"Rift Valley."

Competitors will notice that not all the howlers that were sent in have been printed. Consideration has been accorded to the susceptibilities of our readers but entrants may rest assured that the censored items have raised a good laugh in this office! The prize, nevertheless, can only be given for those printed and we have decided this week to give it to W.E.L.

Future Competition

Film Titles.

Hollywood seems very keen on filming Shakespeare lately. However, his antiquated and rather dull titles will surely never lure audiences into cinemas. Film fans like their screen titles red hot. For an instance, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" might have been better box-office if it had been called "A Hot Night in a Wood"; or Julius Caesar, "Death of a Dictator." We will give a prize for the best alternative American title for a film of one of Shakespeare's plays. Entries should reach this office by April 27th.

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Just Arrived

A special selection of American Washing Dresses and Hats at the

KAUFMANS,
Regal Mansions Nairobi.

AN ADVERT.

on

SUNDAY

brings business

on

MONDAY.

ENGLISHWOMAN IN ABYSSINIA

By Katharine Fannin.

When I am asked "What impressed you most in Abyssinia" I have one answer: the ROADS—first, last and all the time. In the Italian view the cheapest and quickest method of opening up and settling a country is to establish as soon as possible a series of superbly built tarmac arterial roads capable of standing up to unlimited heavy traffic; to build a network of stone-ballasted all-weather district roads to link up the arterial system, and from the start to construct on all routes bridges capable of supporting a minimum of twenty six tons, so that they do not have to be rebuilt when districts develop.

The Arterial Roads.

The tarmac roads cost the equivalent of ten thousand pounds a mile, and the Italian P.W.D. has carte blanche and direct orders from the home Government to complete the arterial system in the shortest possible time. These roads are constructed partly by Government, and partly by big engineering firms such as Puricelli, Ceratto, and others working under contract. Don't ask me where the money comes from. All I can tell you is

at nearly 8000 miles of these asphalt "auto-strade" are completed; and I saw similar work in progress all over Italian East Africa.

Perhaps it may be of general interest to give a brief description of how our northern neighbours build their great trunk roads.

These tarmac highways are about thirty feet wide, have solid stone foundations sometimes as much as two meters in depth, are then built up with a centre spine and side buttresses of squared stone blocks, fitted in with graduated stone chips and rubble, finished off on top with a hand-laid mosaic of small flattish stones, sealed and waterproofed with a five inch coat of heat and wear-resisting bitumen, and finally re-inforced along the sides with solid earth banks. When all is ready they are practically indestructible, and nothing short of an earthquake or a direct hit by a bomb, could make much impression on them. This is the old Roman road building with a vengeance. Enduring, solid, and a lasting monument to the stout-hearted courage that has driven and is still in the process of driving such roads through some of the most discouraging and heartbreaking engineering country in the world. The dozens of really fine bridges are built in the same enduring manner. A few are concrete and girder affairs; but steel has to be bought abroad and is expensive, so one crosses wide rivers on massive stone arches set on equally massive, stone pillars, and I am certain that come what may, a thousand years hence there will still be traces of these great new Roman highways in Africa. I will tell you about two in particular; one military, and the other purely commercial

sian "Canterbury" the sacred village of Axum where a much revered Coptic Abuna—High Priest—has his little 16th century church; and where in the courtyard of the latter (as women are not allowed in Coptic holy of holies) I had the rare privilege of seeing the church's treasures. The grave and dignified "Chapter" a collection of polite and friendly Abyssinian priests, brought out for my inspection their wonderful Gold Book of Amhara, a parchment tome about the size of a bank ledger with massive gold covers, and full of brightly coloured paintings of the lives of saints, martyrs, and of the Queen of Sheba, who is supposed to have come from Shoa. Ethiopian painting is curiously Byzantine in effect, and very childish in execution. But it has one delightful characteristic. All good people are drawn full or three-quarter face and look you in the eye with both of theirs. But undesirables, Satan, dragons and such are always in profile; for, you see, it is well

Before I left Axum I took films of the Abuna and his "Chapter" grouped on the odd collection of stones known as the Coronation Chair. It put me in mind of some druidical relic; as did the hundred or so disordered monoliths standing in a nearby field. The Commissario told me that these and other Axum antiquities such as pillars with unidentifiable inscriptions had roused such interest amongst his country's archaeologists that already learned old beavers in Rome and Padua and other university towns are conducting spirited paper warfare in support of their own pet theories. It's a pity we can't make them a present of Gadi. But all this has rather led me away from the Ualchafit Pass Road.

After driving through plains and cultivation, and across the River Taccazze on the Gondar road, one suddenly comes to the fantastic upflung jumble of needle peaks and precipices of the Semien. Imagine

edge is a good wide stone balustrade, and I can tell you I felt extremely grateful for its presence! Half way up I sat on it (to un-dizzy myself) and swung my heels over eternity while I listened to the silvery whisper of a little Florentine fountain beside me. For there in that savage and pitiless country some Italian thinking of home has persuaded a tiny mountain stream to throw a feathered jet high into the clear air, and to tinkle into a little stone basin all garlanded and set about with terracotta flowers and dolphins beautifully carved and fashioned: a labour of love if there ever there was one.

When I stopped at the summit and looked back at the astounding drop, and away into the distance, so far as the eye could reach, at a sea of wild jumbled peaks and precipices I had a feeling that in my life I am not likely again to see anything to equal what I call to myself the Miracle of Ualchafit. Fifteen thousand Italian soldier road-builders made this military road, and made it in the face of enemy opposition; for when work began Abyssinians held all the surrounding heights. Even now for greater security civilian cars and lorries travel through this perfect ambush country in guarded convoys. I had to do so too. But beyond the top of the Pass is a lovely fertile plain stretching away to Lake Tana, and thirty miles or so along there is already a big settlement of Roman peasants ploughing the land, growing grain of various kinds, and building small houses; for this year they expect to be joined by their wives and children.

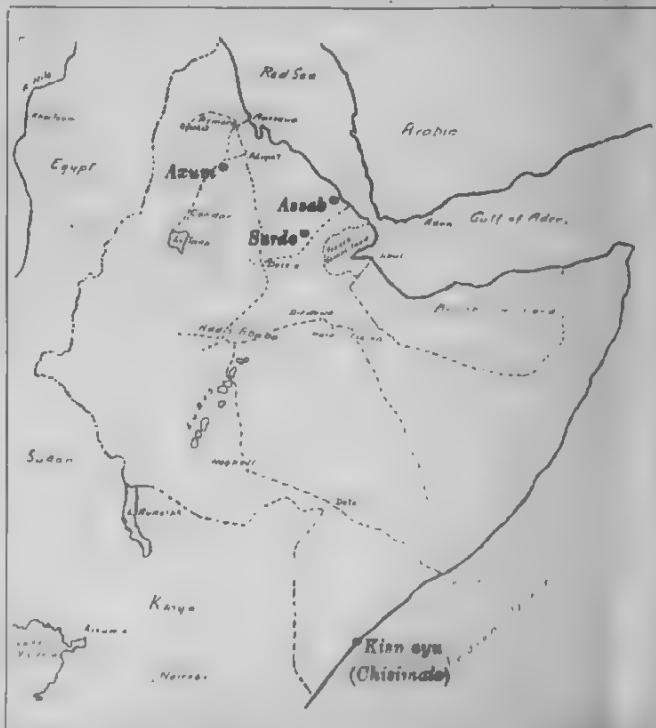
The Danakil Road.

By no stretch of the imagination could this be called a military road, for it crosses an area where the Italians have never had any native trouble, and it is being constructed to connect the Red Sea port of Assab with Addis Ababa. As such it is of great commercial importance, and is one of the chief arterial roads.

In Dankalia another desolate, savage and wildly difficult country has had to be traversed. Between Assab and Sardho shade temperatures of 74c. (165f.) have been recorded, and the land itself is nothing but a gigantic Hell's slag heap of pitch black lava boulders, of choppy oceans of knife-edged iron-hard volcanic cinders, of great plateaus of black stones, of stark towering rusty-sided volcanoes; and as "light" relief, a vast glaring white lake of solid salt. The whole effect is so weird and Dantesque that it is quite frightening.

Nesbitt, the only English person besides myself who has so far crossed this extraordinary country, aptly describes it as resembling nothing but telescopic photographs of the moon. He is quite right: a veritable Abomination of Desolation, but oddly fascinating.

However: where it was ready I drove along a superb steel blue tarmac ribbon on which for the past eighteen months 24,000 natives (11,000 of them British Sudanese indentured with the approval of the Imperial Government) and about 3000 Italians



known in Abyssinia that only the honest man can look the world in the face. (So now you know)!

I was also shown the elaborate gold and jewelled three-decker crowns worn on state occasions; a perfectly marvellous solid gold triptych icon of the Virgin; a number of lovely gold and silver eight-pointed ceremonial crosses; and masses of beautiful embroideries not local work, but gifts from Egypt and elsewhere. Abyssinians are devout Copts, and it is very interesting on Sundays to see the big picturesque congregations at their curious octagonal churches. All natives in Italian East Africa are of course absolutely free to worship as they please; and while the enormous majority are Mohammedan or pagan, well known Coptic monasteries such as Debra Tabor, Debra Libanos and others have a big following and are well supported.

ed bare wild red sandstone mountains twelve to fourteen thousand feet high; sunless gloomy valleys covered in dense undergrowth; five thousand foot crumpling precipices and tables, and so far as one can see no way of reaching the top except by scrambling on hands and knees, or by flying. Two and a half years ago the only way over this formidable barrier which practically isolated Gondar, Lake Tana and N.W. Abyssinia was a dangerous and difficult mule track where one false step meant the end of one's earthly troubles, to say the least of it.

This February I drove up and over that ten thousand foot barrier on a wide superb ribbon which is for some thousands of feet blasted out of a sheer precipice, and is carried to the top on walls in a series of long zig-zags and hairpin bends. Along the

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The Ualcheft Pass

Driving south-west on a tarmac racing track from Asmara in Eritrea to the River Taccaze which winds along the foot of the stupendous Tigre escarpment of the Semien, I passed through that Abyssinian region where the people are Mohammedan or pagan, well known Copt monasteries such as Debra Tabor, Devra Libanos and others have a big following and are well supported.

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SUPER INDIA TYRES

INDIA

THE FINEST TYRES MADE



SUPER INDIA TYRES

Englishwoman in Abyssinia - (Contd.)

have been at work. From May to September it is so hot that nothing can be done after 9 a.m. so construction is carried on at night with flares. Some of the big camps are more than fifty miles from any water supply, nothing lives in the lava belt, there isn't a tree or shrub for hundreds of miles in any direction, and if people care to think, they will appreciate the courage and organizing ability required, to build a road successfully through this disheartening country.

This particular 'artery' will be ready and officially sanctioned for all traffic from September next. Lorries loaded with goods and petrol will leave Assab at dusk, cover the grilling lava belt at night when conditions are better, and arrive in Addis after a journey of about twenty-four hours, which is approximately the time it takes for one to reach Addis by rail from Jibuti. I personally did the Assab-Addis motor run in 17½ hours driving time, in an ordinary car, and in addition, having to bucket over all the unfinished bits. I have no doubt that when the road is through one will without difficulty be able to do the six hundred miles between Addis and Assab in a day, if one is driving a biggish fairly powerful car of the type we use so much in Kenya.

Exchange of Courtesies!

On my trip across Dankalia I encountered a delightful and (to me) welcome illustration that when it comes down to brass tacks we are all — whatever our nationality — pretty much alike; as this example may show.

Driving along the tarmac in the middle of a wildly lonely desolate hell of lava boulders, what should I come upon but a struggling mass of lorries some going right and some left like an elephantine set of lancers, and all in a thorough state of blasphemy, while from behind a barrier of empty petrol drums a cheerful gang took their

ease in the shade of a steam-roller and passed the time in quip and jest. A very large and unnecessary board said ROAD CLOSED; and equally large and officious red arrows pointed one down truly discouraging deviations. There were tarmac sprayers about, but so far as I could see the road itself continued its lovely smooth blue way. So while the congested lorries sorted themselves out and bumped away to right and left, I stopped for a "tell" as we say in my native Devon, and to drink (in cold coffee) the healths of their respective Majesties of Italy and England. All was friendliness and great goodwill, and when I was ready to leave, barrier and boards were moved aside, and I was politely waved through.

But before I left on my way to the road camp where I was to spend the night, I said to the big cheerful foreman "Between ourselves, why is the road closed?" and got the delicious answer "Signora, Do you think I am going to have people making horrible marks on my beautiful new asphalt? What do they think roads are for! I won't have my lovely tarmac ruined by their clumsy great lorries — not likely! They can go round." And he gazed fondly down a dead straight unblemished five-mile race track, while his mates put back barrier and board, and hung Dietz lamps on those heartless arrows by which all comers wistfully eyeing that promised (tarmac!) land beyond would be inexorably deviated into dreary lava wastes where for twenty kilometres they must bump hideously and infuriatedly along their involuntary via dolorosa.

Is there really such a vast difference between George our British Road Foreman, and Gorgio the Capo Squadri his Italian opposite number? I think not!

Katharine Fannin.

26.4.1939.

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During May

make a special point of asking
for Medicines and Toilet Pre-
parations by

Boots
(The Manufacturing
Chemists)

You have the security of Boots Laboratory control
at every stage of the production of everything that
carries Boots Labels.

REFUELING PLANES LEAVE FOR
MONTREAL

On board the s.s. "Beaverford" sailing from Southampton for Montreal last Friday were two converted Harrow bombing planes en route to Botwood, Newfoundland, where they will be used as refuelling tankers for Imperial Airways' Atlantic flying boats this summer. In last week's "Sunday Post" we published the first photograph of this refuelling over mid-ocean.

The Harrows are large, high-wing, two-engined monoplanes, 83 feet long with a wing span of 87 feet. They were flown from Ford, Sussex, earlier in the week, to Hamble near Southampton, where they were dismantled. The hulls were placed aboard the "Beaverford" by means of a floating crane and lashed to the decks of the freighter.

They will be taken to Fairchild Airport, Montreal, where they will be reassembled and eventually flown to the Newfoundland Airport at Botwood.

It is anticipated that Imperial Airways will commence trans-Atlantic operations as soon as Botwood Harbour is completely free from ice. The flying-boats of the Cabot Class which will be utilised for this service are all equipped for being fuelled in mid-air in order to increase their range without reducing their payload. Two

other tankers meanwhile are being prepared for use at the Shannon base in Ireland.

The operation is carried out by means of a 200 foot rubber hose, through which petrol flows from the tanker to the flying-boat at the rate of 120 gallons a minute. 1,000 gallons of petrol will be poured into the flying-boats' tanks in this manner. The operation is carried out while the aircraft are travelling at about 125 miles an hour, and can be successfully accomplished at any height and in any but the most severe weather. The method has been perfected by Flight Refuelling Ltd., in co-operation with Imperial Airways and the British Air Ministry.

Sir Alan Cobham visualises a round-the-world route operated by Imperial Airways' flying-boats refuelled in mid-air at 20 strategic points by Harrow tankers.

Shipyards Hard at Work

A brighter picture of Tyneside shipping was painted by the Tyne Improvement Commission, the port authority, which met at Newcastle on Monday.

It was stated that with 34 vessels, totalling 280,000 tons, under construction, every shipyard on the river was working at full pressure with the exception of one, and every shipbuilding berth was occupied.

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A slight decline, however, was shown in the general import trade.

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Summer Service Begins

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It is now possible for passengers to fly to the most distant parts of Europe within a day. There are 14 services daily to Paris and eight to Holland.

Eight of the 14 services to Paris are operated by Imperial Airways, whose planes leave Croydon at two-hourly intervals, from 8.45 in the morning till 10.45 at night.

The services to Holland are operated by Dutch Air Lines, Swedish Air Lines, and German Air Lines.

From May 3, when extended summer services come into operation, it will be possible for a passenger leaving Croydon at 9.15 in the morning to be in Moscow before nightfall. This service is known as the Moscow Air Express. A passenger using it will travel in planes of three nationalities — Dutch, Welsh and Russian.

This particular 'artery' will be ready and officially sanctioned for all traffic from September next. Lorries loaded with goods and petrol will leave Assab at dusk, cover the grilling lava belt at night when conditions are better, and arrive in Addis after a journey of about twenty-four hours, which is approximately the time it takes for one to reach Addis by rail from Jibuti. I personally did the Assab-Addis motor run in 17½ hours driving time, in an ordinary car, and in addition, having to bucket over all the unfinished bits. I have no doubt that when the road is through one will without difficulty be able to do the six hundred miles between Addis and Assab in a day, if one is driving a biggish fairly powerful car of the type we use so much in Kenya.

Exchange of Courtesies!

On my trip across Dankalia I encountered a delightful and (to me) welcome illustration that when it comes down to brass tacks we are all — whatever our nationality — pretty much alike; as this example may show.

Driving along the tarmac in the middle of a wildly lonely desolate hell of lava boulders, what should I come upon but a struggling mass of lorries some going right and some left like an elephantic set of lancers, and all in a thorough state of blasphemy, while from behind a barrier of empty petrol drums a cheerful gang took their

gold coins! The meaning for their respective Majesties of Italy and England. All was friendliness and great goodwill, and when I was ready to leave, barrier and boards were moved aside, and I was politely waved through.

But before I left on my way to the road camp where I was to spend the night, I said to the big cheerful foreman "Between ourselves, why is the road closed?" and got the delicious answer "Signora, Do you think I am going to have people making horrible marks on my beautiful new asphalt? What do they think roads are for? I won't have my lovely tarmac ruined by their clumsy great lorries — not likeiy! They can go round." And he gazed fondly down a dead straight unblemished five-mile race track, while his mates put back barrier and board, and hung Dietz lamps on those heartless arrows by which all comers wistfully eyeing that promised (tarmac!) land beyond would be inexorably deviated into dreary lava wastes where for twenty kilometres they must bump hideously and infuriatedly along their involuntary via dolorosa.

Is there really such a vast difference between George our British Road Foreman, and Gorgio the Capo Squadri his Italian opposite number? I think not!

Katharine Fannin.

26-4-1939.

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During May

make a special point of asking
for Medicines and Toilet Pre-
parations by



Boots
(The Manufacturing Chemists).

You have the security of Boots Laboratory control at every stage of the production of everything that carries Boots Labels.

Ask your Chemist or Toilet Store for Boots' products. The prices are modest enough to reduce your Chemist's bill considerably.

wing, two-engined monoplanes, 83 feet long with a wing span of 87 feet. They were flown from Ford, Sussex, earlier in the week, to Hamble near Southampton, where they were dismantled. The hulls were placed aboard the 'Beaverford' by means of a floating crane and lashed to the decks of the freighter.

They will be taken to Fairchild Airport, Montreal, where they will be reassembled and eventually flown to the Newfoundland Airport at Botwood.

It is anticipated that Imperial Airways will commence trans-Atlantic operations as soon as Botwood Harbour is completely free from ice. The flying-boats of the Cabot Class which will be utilised for this service are all equipped for being fuelled in mid-air in order to increase their range without reducing their payload. Two

hours, and can be successfully accomplished at any height and in any but the most severe weather. The method has been perfected by Flight Refuelling Ltd., in co-operation with Imperial Airways and the British Air Ministry.

Sir Alan Cobham visualises a round-the-world route operated by Imperial Airways' flying-boats refuelled in mid-air at 20 strategic points by Harrow tankers.

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A slight decline, however, was shown in the general import trade.

German Food Shortage

Women Arrested for Grumbling

Rocketing prices and acute shortage of foodstuffs in Berlin are now giving rise daily to angry scenes in the public markets.

Violent disputes constantly take place between wholesalers and small retailers, and between the retailers and housewives who come to the stalls and do their marketing.

In most cases the disputes are due to shortage of fats, meat and other foodstuffs. In others they are on account of what is known as "couple selling."

This practice is strictly forbidden under police orders, which prescribe heavy penalties for contravention. It consists of refusing to sell commodities of which there is a shortage unless the purchaser also buys goods which he does not want and for which there is no demand.

Small traders who wish to buy bananas or oranges, which are at present extremely rare in Germany, cannot do so unless they also take large quantities of spinach, cabbages, turnips and carrots. These frequently rot before they can be disposed of.

Boycott Fear.
Many street traders have been forced by this practice to give up the sale of fruit altogether.

Retailers who were asked why they did not lodge complaints with the police when they were faced with "couple selling" replied that if they did so they would be boycotted by the wholesalers in every Berlin market.

Housewives who are constantly told that the goods which they need are not available, or are asked to pay the current high prices, frequently make scenes. Shortly before Easter seven women were taken into custody by the police in a Berlin market for complaining loudly about the German food conditions and about the despatch by the Reich of shiploads of flour from Spain.

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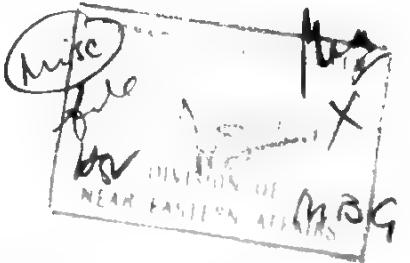
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AN ADVERT.
on
SUNDAY
brings business
on
MONDAY.

NO. 240

AMERICAN CONSULATE,
Nairobi, Colony of Kenya, Africa
May 8, 1939



SUBJECT: Conditions in Abyssinia.
2-1036 GPO

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

Copy to Embassy, Rome
" Consulate, Aden

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

Copy forwarded by the
Commercial Office (A-M, O)
To *John Aden*

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 236
dated May 3, 1939 on this subject and to attach the
third of Mrs. Katharine Fannin's articles dealing
with her three months' sojourn in Abyssinia. This
article appeared in The Sunday Post of May 7, 1939
and is devoted to settlement activities in Abyssinia.

Respectfully yours,

E. Talbot Smith
E. Talbot Smith
American Consul

Enclosure:
No. 1. Newspaper Article.

800
ETS/GH

Original and four copies
to Department of State

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ENGLISHWOMAN IN ABYSSINIA

By Katharine Fannin.

Mrs. Fannin, the first Englishwoman to travel through Abyssinia since the Italian occupation, describes this week several of the Italian settlements and experimental shambas that have been established in the last two years. The contrast between the methods adopted in Italy's new colony and those followed in Kenya is worth studying. Mrs. Fannin returned to Kenya in March and is now occupied on a book describing her experiences in Abyssinia.

Last week I referred to a settlement of Roman peasants who are cultivating the land on the high plateau beyond the Ualchifit Pass in north-west Abyssinia. They are married ex-soldiers, and as soon as their small houses are built they will be joined by their wives and families from Italy. At present the men live in sort of long communal barracks, and spend the day ploughing wide fields, breaking new land, planting grain, and experimenting with vegetables. It all seemed well thought out. Being pleased by small things I liked the neat circular hay-cocks, Noah's ark affairs which they build evenly by hanging long bits of string with stones on the end, from a central pole. This particular settlement is at Kilometre 68 from Gondar, and is therefore a good long way from any big centre. It is also in the so-called bandit country, but nobody seems to worry about that. All work is done by the Italians themselves; and the Coast/Lake Tana arterial road passes right through the middle of this farming area.

Between Dessie and Addis Ababa and within sight of another arterial road are some more experimental shambas, some run by Government and some by private venture. So far as I could make out Government at present concentrates on staple food crops such as wheat and sugar, and also grows cotton. Other specialized small crops I saw were tomatoes—grown in a perfect forest of rances which reminded me of market gardens at home—peas, beans, lettuces, and so on.

All along this road to the Termaber Pass where one climbs and climbs and eventually drives through a long road tunnel to come out on the high central Abyssinian plateau, there are rich fertile little landlocked depressions with plenty of water from streams and swamps. The country is wild and broken and very lovely to look at, but I should think not much good for farming on a large scale. Native cultivation is interesting as it takes the form of intricate terracing up almost vertical hillsides, and every small ledge and spur has its little patch of coarse grain. On some of the flat bits different native families mark out their holdings with single euphorbia hedges. The small plain round Lake Ashangi is covered with lush grazing, and there are always large flocks and herds of native owned stock taking advantage of it. Between the Termaber Pass and Addis one drives across part of the very extensive plateau and sees a fair amount of cultivation and large numbers of mules and cattle. Abyssinians are great on horses, mules and donkeys, and personal standing used to be judged by ownership of these animals.

Italian family settlement.

It is on other parts of this fertile central plateau that the

which are respectively thirty miles west and the same distance south of Addis, and where Italian peasant families are already on the land working it themselves and grow wheat and other grain.

This is briefly how the subsidised settlement scheme is run.

In Italy a family is reckoned as a man, wife and three children, and family settlement is being worked out on this basis. At present such settlement is being confined to married ex-service men with good records. They are drawn very largely from over-crowded agricultural districts in Italy, and therefore have a tradition of work on the land in their blood. Families are carefully picked so that only hardworking self-respecting folk are chosen for this scheme, and settlement is by districts; that is: all peasants settled in one area in Abyssinia will be from Apulia; another from Venetia and so on. This is being done deliberately so that settlers will not feel too strange or lonely in their new lives in Africa, for they will hear their own country dialects spoken, and have as neighbours those from their own parts of Italy.

I was told that hundreds of applications have to be turned down, as vacancies are strictly limited, for the scheme is at present in its experimental stage, and all phases of it are being most carefully watched.

A family when accepted for emigration is sent out to Abyssinia on two years probation, and on arrival at the settlement is provided with a small labour-saving stone house complete with a good stove and certain other necessities, and is expected to get down to it and work the bit of land which falls to the lot of each separate family to cultivate. This varies in area according to the district, but I think the average is about 100 acres. In these Government settlements the entire work of the small homesteads—houses and land is done by the present themselves. There is not a whitsoever of any kind of labour being employed there. The Government arranges school and medical facilities on a communal basis, and is responsible for co-operative marketing which disposes of all main crops grown. Each settlement has a sort of central recreational club for the workers, certain farm implements are provided, and to begin with, big things like tractors are used in common.

If at the end of the probationary period any families prove unsuitable or are not likely to get on well in the country, they are repatriated to Italy. But those who remain are able after a bit to be owner of their little hold

and the main

generation a better chance. No one can expect to make a large personal fortune by this scheme. But the Italian Government hopes that it will eventually ensure for thousands of the new generation a healthier and happier life than they might otherwise have had.

As each new settlement becomes self-supporting, Government help ceases. Olieta is brand new. In fact I saw myself the arrival of 150 families—men, women and children—a couple of weeks before I left Addis in March. But Bisciofatu has been going for some time and I was told that it is now standing on its own legs. In that district, in addition to the fields and homesteads, one passes by the roadside, an enormous new mill which deals with the produce for miles around. I saw and was impressed by both settlements, for it was the first time I had actually seen white peasant families at work on the land in Africa.

What Will Be the Future of This White Settlement?

Some people say that subsidised settlement such as that of the twenty-five thousand Italian peasants in Libya, and the several hundred families now on the land in Abyssinia is likely to prove unsatisfactory. I wonder? I have not visited Libya, nor do I know much about the theory or practice of settlement. So personally I do not feel myself competent to express an opinion on whether the co-operative scheme now being tried out to the north of us is likely to be a success or a failure. But I do think this. If you offer a land-loving human being a stake in a country, and encourage him to make a decent home for himself and his wife and family, surely the chances are that he will appreciate his opportunity, and become attached to his surroundings, when he knows that if he is prepared to do an honest job of work his certain (not problematical) reward will be a place of his own, and an infinitely healthier and better environment for his children.

The Italians hope in time to settle very large numbers of their people in their Empire, perhaps

millions. This, they contend, can be achieved only by the people themselves working. So in this Government scheme there is (and will be) absolutely no place for what might be called the "employer class of farmer. Italian peasants settlers are now, and will be in future, their own farm labour, their own shamba boys, tractor drivers, ploughmen and everything else; while their women-folk look after the children, cook, and run the household generally. In other walks of life, too, work will have to be found for all; so I imagine you will get, on a large scale, conditions which obtain at present amongst the 800,000 men and women already in Italian East Africa: Italians themselves doing every sort of job: farm hands, waiters and maids in hotels and private houses, mechanics, builders and masons, road gangs, shop-assistants, childrens' nurses, soldiers, cooks, little store and restaurant keepers, transport workers, car and lorry drivers, and a host more.

Who can say what problems, native and otherwise, the Italian Government will have to face, as have all white Administrations in Africa. And who can foresee the future of a big white population set down in this incalculable continent? The fertile and healthy provinces of Galla-Sidama alone is almost equal in area to Italy: what will they make of it? It is beyond me even to hazard a guess.

But to return to the present: I happen to come from a remote but lovely country district in England, and like most country-folk, have an affection for the land and for the people who live and work on it—whatever their nationality. Perhaps it was this reason that made me feel when I saw the sturdy friendly peasant families working so willingly on their little holdings, that I would like to wish them happy and peaceful lives in the new Empire of which all Italians are so proud, and for which (a fact often overlooked) all classes are having to make very real sacrifices.

(Copyright reserved by Mrs. K. Fannin).

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If at the end of the probationary period any families prove unsuitable or are not likely to get on well in the country, they are repatriated to Italy. But those who remain are able after a bit to become owners of their little holdings and houses, and the main idea at the back of this big scheme, and of that in operation in Libya where twenty-five thousand Italian peasants are now on the land, are to provide an outlet for Italy's swarming population, to increase Italian self-sufficiency by the cultivation of food crops, and above all to give the rising

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Girls Who Beat King Gustav

Story Against Himself

PARIS, Monday.
King Gustav of Sweden, a keen tennis player despite his 80 years, told the following story against himself at a luncheon party given by President Lebrun.

"Your French girls," said the King, "are really very amusing, and completely without affectation, a trait which I find most admirable in them."

"The other day at Nice I was wandering around, unaccompanied, and waiting for a game, with my racket under my arm. I heard a young girl player remark to her opponent, 'Look at that old fellow over there. He doesn't seem to have anything to do. Suppose we both take him on.'"

"Ah," said Jean Borotra, the tennis ex-champion, who was a fellow guest, "I am afraid you find the youth of our country very badly brought up."

"Not at all," replied the King. "I could see quite easily that they hadn't recognised me, for they didn't even let me win a set."

Cut this out and keep it.

SUNDAY POST SOCCER LIST — SEASON 1939

8 May	6. D. Railway v. R.A.F. Headquarters.	W. Aug.	9. D. Railway v. R.A.F. Squadron.
W. "	10. D. Nairobi Athletic v. Civil Service.	S. "	5. No Match.
S. "	12. D. Caledonians v. R.A.F. Squadron.	W. "	9. D. Nairobi Athletic v. R.A.F. Headquarters.
W. "	14. D. R.A.F. Headquarters v. R.A.F. Squadron.	S. "	10. D. Civil Service v. Railway.
S. "	20. D. Nairobi Athletic v. Railway.	W. "	16. D. Caledonians v. R.A.F. Headquarters.
W. "	24. D. Civil Service v. R.A.F. Squadron.	S. "	19. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. Nairobi Athletic.
S. "	27. D. R.A.F. Headquarters v. Caledonians.	W. "	23. B. Civil Service v. Caledonians.
W. "	31. D. Railway v. Caledonians.	S. "	26. Europeans v. Asians.
S. June	8. D. R.A.F. Headquarters v. Nairobi Athletic.	G. Goldfields v. Kitale.	
W. "	7. D. Railway v. Civil Service.	M. "	29. Dobbie Cup Winners v. The Rest.
S. "	10. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. Railway.	W. "	30. B. R.A.F. Squadron v. Nairobi Athletic.
W. "	14. D. Nairobi Athletic v. R.A.F. Squadron.	S. Sept.	9. G. Royal Air Force v. Caledonians.
S. "	17. D. Nairobi Athletic v. Caledonians.	G. Mombasa Sports Club v. Civil Service.	
W. "	21. D. R.A.F. Headquarters v. Civil Service.	W. "	6. B. Semi-Final. Civil Service or Caledonians v. Railway.
S. "	24. D. Civil Service v. Nairobi Athletic.	S. "	9. G. Railway v. Nairobi Athletic.
W. "	28. D. R.A.F. Headquarters v. Railway.	G. Nakuru v. Goldfields or Kitale.	
S. July	1. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. R.A.F. Headquarters.	W. "	18. B. Semi-Final. R.A.F. Squadron or Nairobi Athletic v. R.A.F. Headquarters.
W. "	5. D. Caledonians v. Civil Service.	S. "	10. G. Semi-Final.
S. "	8. No Match.	M. "	18. C.
M. "	10. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. Caledonians.	W. "	20. G.
W. "	12. D. Railway v. Nairobi Athletic.	S. "	23. B. Final.
S. "	15. D. Caledonians v. Railway.	M. "	25. C.
W. "	19. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. Civil Service.	W. "	27. G.
S. "	22. No Match.	S. "	30. G. Final.
M. "	24. D. Civil Service v. R.A.F. Headquarters.		
W. "	26. D. Caledonians v. Nairobi Athletic.		
S. "	29. D. Civil Service v. Caledonians.		

NOTES: — "D" = "Dobbie", "B" = "Boyes", "G" = "Girouard", "C" = "Craig" Cup Competitions.

THE WEEK'S RACING

(Supplied by Mr. J. J. Jackson)

May 1st, 1939.

LEEDS

"Derbyshire Handicap" Straight Mile.

(1) Sir Pomm (Mr. P. Jackson)	W. Nevett	7	9
(2) Thysa (Mr. C. O. Hall)	Gordon Richards	7	13
(3) Halcyon Gift (Mrs. Monkhouse) E. Gardner	8	7	7
Winner trained by Elsey.	Scratched: Bobby Dazzler, Felcarte.		
Scratched: Bobby Dazzler, Felcarte.	B ran.		

"Chaddean Handicap" 5 fms.

(1) Caddy (Mr. J. Bisgood)	J. Marshall	9	7
(2) Rumous (Sir Malcolm McAlpine) M. Beary	8	11	11
(3) Pluto Club (Mr. J. U. Gaskell) W. Subritt	7	9	9
Winner trained by Bisgood.	Scratched: Noble Bay, Calamitus, Petty Sessions, River Law, In Bo Much		
Scratched: Noble Bay, Calamitus, Petty Sessions, River Law, In Bo Much	13 ran.		

May 2nd, 1939.

CHESTER

"Chester Vase" 1½ miles 66 yds.

(1) Heliospolis (Lord Derby)	T. Weston	8	2
(2) Germanicus (Mr. T. Lant)	D. Smith	7	4
(3) Southern Port (Mr. P. Behan) W. Nevett	7	9	9
Winner trained by C. Leader.	Scratched: Best Harrow, 10 ran.		

"Great Cheshire H'cap" 1½ miles 10 yds.

(1) Flying Star (Major L. B. Holliday) W. Nevett	8	6	
(2) Taran (M. M. Bousac) Gordon Richards	8	8	
(3) Noble Turk (Mr. Alfred Sambury) E. Smith	9	2	
Winner trained by M. Peacock.	Scratched: Pigskin, Minico, Sandon.		
Scratched: Pigskin, Minico, Sandon.	B ran.		

"Prince of Wales H'cap" 5 fms.

(1) Field of Gold (Mr. E. Strong)	O. Smurk	8	2
(2) Houltchan (Mrs. Sofer) M. Beary	8	1	
(3) Polatto (Mr. F. Neilson) H. Wragg	8	12	
Winner trained by P. Hartigan.	Scratched: Yasta, Scotch Tweed		
Scratched: Yasta, Scotch Tweed	12 ran.		

May 3rd, 1939.

CHESTER

"Chester Cup" 3½ miles and 77 yds.

1. Winnerbar Sir Frederick Gordon Richards	7	10
2. Irish Stew	8	1
3. Eildon Hill (Brie Gen. Churchill)		

"Coronation Plate" 6 fms.

1. Zindano Sir W. H.		
----------------------	--	--

Karakul Pelts in Demand

Shri Sanatana Dharam Sabha

A message from Windhoek states that pessimists who predicted that karakul sheep skins would go the same way as ostrich feathers, continue to be confounded. Last year South-West Africa had a record export total of 1,250,000 pelts. Very profitable prices were obtained and the outlook for this season, judging by recent sales in London, shows promise of even a better year for both prices and production. The demand continues to exceed the supply.

The General Election of Shri S. D. Mahavir Dal was held on the 29th April, 1939 at 6 p.m. at Shri Sanatana Dharam Sabha's Hall and the following Office Bearers were selected for the year 1939-40.

President, Mr. Suraj Narain. Hon. Gen. Secretary, Mr. S. D. Kalia. Asst. Secretary, Mr. R. N. Bhalla. Treasurer, Mr. M. L. Kapur. Captain, Mr. S. L. Maini. Band Master, Mr. Paras Ram. Storekeeper, Mr. S. L. Nohan. Managing Committee Members: — Messrs. Mohan Lal, Birkhand, C. D. Aggarwal and Chakar Pal.

THERE'S NO ROAD SO ROUGH OR UNRELIABLE THAT IS NOT MADE SAFER BY

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The African Merchantile Co., Ltd.

mirable in them.

"The other day at Nice I was wandering around, unaccompanied, and waiting for a game, with my racket under my arm. I heard a young girl player remark to her opponent, 'Look at that old fellow over there. He doesn't seem to have anything to do. Suppose we both take him on.'"

"Ah," said Jean Borotra, the tennis ex-champion, who was a fellow guest, "I am afraid you find the youth of our country very badly brought up."

"Not at all," replied the King. "I could see quite easily that they hadn't recognised me, for they didn't even let me win a set."

THE WEEK'S RACING

(Supplied by Mr. Rosenthal)

May 1st, 1939.

DEPTY

"Doveridge Handicap" Straight Mile.

(1) Sir Pomm (Mr. P. Juelson)	7	9
W. Nevett	7	9
(2) Thyia (Mr. C. O. Hall)	7	13
Gordon Richards	7	13
(3) Halcyon Gift (Mrs. Monkhouse) E. Gardner	8	7
Winner trained by Eleye.		
Scratched: Bobby Dazzler, Felcarte.		
8 ran.		

"Chaddesden Handicap" 5 fms.

(1) Caddy (Mr. J. Bingood)	9	7
J. Marshall	9	7
(2) Rumeur (Sir Malcolm Mc-Alpine) M. Beary	8	11
(6) Flute Club (Mr. J. U. Gaskell)	7	9
W. Sibbit	7	9
Winner trained by Bingood.		
Scratched: Noble Bay, Calamachis, Petty Sessions, River Law, In So Much.		
18 ran.		

May 2nd, 1939.

CHESTER

"Chester Vase" 1½ miles 68 yds.

(1) Hippolops (Lord Derby)	8	9
T. Weston	8	9
(2) Germanicus (Mr. T. Lant)	7	4
D. Smith	7	4
(3) Southern Port (Mr. P. Behan)	7	9
W. Nevett	7	9
Winner trained by C. Leader.		
Scratched: Rest Harrow. 10 ran.		

"Great Cheshire H'cap" 1½ miles 10 yds.

(1) Flying Star (Major L. B. Holliday) W. Nevett	8	6
(2) Taras (M. M. Bousc)	8	8
Gordon Richards	8	8
(3) Noble Turk (Mr. Alfred Sainsbury) E. Smith	9	2
Winner trained by M. Peacock.		
Scratched: Pigskin, Monico, Sandon.		
6 ran.		

"Prince of Wales H'cap" 5 fms.

(1) Field of Gold (Mr. E. Strong)	8	2
C. Smirke	8	2
(2) Heulichan (Mrs. Sofer)	8	1
M. Beary	8	1
(6) Folstein (Mr. F. Neilson)	8	19
H. Wragg	8	19
Winner trained by F. Hartigan.		
Scratched: Yanna Scotch Tweed.		
12 ran.		

May 3rd, 1939.

CHESTER

"Chester Cup" 1½ miles and 77 yds.

(1) Winnebar (Sir Frederick Elv)	7	10
G. J. Richards	7	10
(2) Irish Stew (Miss B. Cameron)	8	5
T. Lowry	8	5
(3) Eildon Hill (Brig Gen. Charles Lant) M. Beary	8	1
Winner trained by Templeman		
Scratched: Trevissani. 18 ran.		

"Coronation Plate" 5 fms.

(1) Zingane (Mr. W. H. Thorpe)	7	8
W. Nevett	7	8
(2) Ambrose Light (Mrs. P. B. Widener) W. Stephenson	9	0
(3) Old Reliance (Sir John Jarvis)	8	18
E. Smith	8	18
Winner trained by M. Peacock.		
Scratched: Knight's Armour. 10 ran.		

W. 91. D. R.A.F. Headquarters v. Civil Service.
S. 24. D. Civil Service v. Nairobi Athletic.
W. 28. D. R.A.F. Headquarters v. Railway.

S. July 1. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. R.A.F. Headquarters.
W. 5. D. Caledonians v. Civil Service.
S. 8. No Match.
M. 10. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. Caledonians.
W. 12. D. Railway v. Nairobi Athletic.
S. 15. D. Caledonians v. Railway.
W. 16. D. R.A.F. Squadron v. Civil Service.
S. 22. No Match.
M. 24. D. Civil Service v. R.A.F. Headquarters.
W. 26. D. Caledonians v. Nairobi Athletic.
S. 29. D. Civil Service v. Caledonians.
NOTES:— "D" = "Dobbin", "B" = "Boyes", "G" = "Girouard", "C" = "Craig" Cup Competitions.

W. 6. D. B. Semi-Final. Civil Service v. Caledonians v. Railway.
S. 9. G. Railway v. Nairobi Athletic.
G. Nakuru v. Goldfields or Kitale.
W. 13. B. Semi-Final. R.A.F. Squadron or Nairobi Athletic v. R.A.F. Headquarters.
S. 16. G. Semi-Final.
G. Semi-Final.
M. 18. C.
W. 20. C.
S. 23. B. Final.
M. 25. C.
W. 27. C.
S. 30. G. Final.

Karakul Pelts in Demand

A message from Windhoek states that pessimists who predicted that karakul sheep skins would go the same way as ostrich feathers, continue to be confounded. Last year South-West Africa had a record export total of 1,250,000 pelts. Very profitable prices were obtained and the outlook for this season, judging by recent sales in London, shows promise of even a better year for both prices and production. The demand continues to exceed the supply.

Shri Sanatana Dharam Sabha

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Hon. Gen. Secretary, Mr. S. D. Kalia.
Asst. Secretary, Mr. R. N. Bhalia.
Treasurer, Mr. M. L. Kapur.
Captain, Mr. S. L. Maini.
Band Master, Mr. Paras Ram.
Storekeeper, Mr. S. L. Mohan.
Managing Committee Members:—
Messrs. Mohan Lal, Bichand, C. D. Aggarwal and Chakar Pal.

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DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865.00/1623 FOR Despatch #1458

FROM Italy (Phillips) DATED June 2, 1939
TO NAME 1-127 ...

REGARDING: Italian East Africa.

The Under Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs stated that the political situation in -, was well in hand, but that the same could not be said for the economic situation which was hampered by the high cost of transportation, labor shortage and the Suez Canal situation.

he

865D.00/ 52



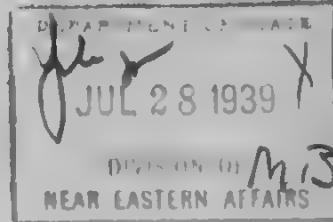
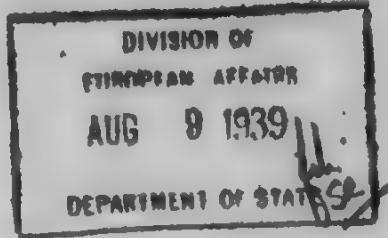
LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bulkeley, Alexandria, June 24, 1939.

No. 1706

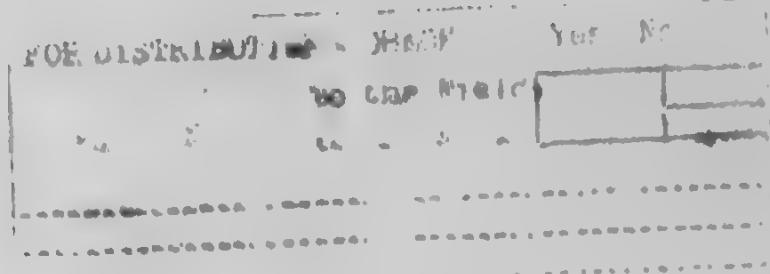
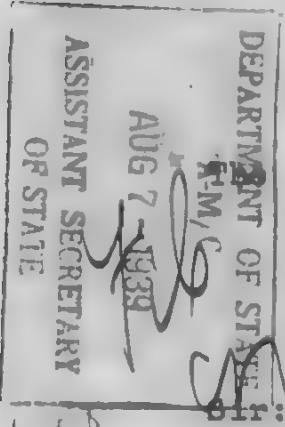
Subject: Flight of Marshal Balbo to Ethiopia.

ANY RECORDS
SHOULD
BE KEPT
BY THE
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN
AFFAIRS



865D.00/53/

AUG 11 1939
DT FILED



Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

I have the honor to state that it is reported that Marshal Balbo plans to fly to Addis Ababa early in July and that the Italian Legation has requested permission of the Egyptian Government for him to fly over Egyptian territory.

The Duke of Aosta, Viceroy of Ethiopia, arrived at Cairo by air from Addis Ababa on June 22 en

route

route to Italy. He was welcomed at the airdrome by the Italian Minister, who made a special trip from Alexandria for the purpose, and by the Cairo Italian Legation and Consulate staffs.

Respectfully yours,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bert Fish".

Bert Fish

In triplicate.
File no. 879.6
WSF/hbh

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 8650.20/48 FOR despatch # 1716

FROM Egypt (Fish) DATED July 1, 1939
TO NAME 1-1137 000

REGARDING:

Abyssinia -

Chief of British Air Intelligence Service at Cairo
states that his latest reports on Abyssinia show that
Italians have made no headway in their program to bring
the country to a peaceful basis.

AS

8650.00/54

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT

Situation in Ethiopia.

Quotes telegram from Vice Consul Walker concerning --

865D.00 / 55

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Despatch #1858

(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Sept. 25, 1939

From | Egypt
To |

File No. 865a.20/55



LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Cairo, November 18, 1939.

Strictly Confidential

No. 1910.

Subject: Situation in Ethiopia.

WSV
J.W.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOV 19 1939
MR. WELLES

W
The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a strictly confidential memorandum dated November 18, 1939, prepared by Vice Consul Jay Walker at Cairo, regarding political, economic, military and rebel activities in Ethiopia.

Respectfully yours,

Bart Fish
Bart Fish

closure: Copy of Memorandum No. 1910,
dated November 18, 1939.

1939

100

Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 1910 of November 18,
1939, from the American Legation at Cairo.

(Correct Copy - ICG)

MEMORANDUM

(Strictly Confidential)

No. 27.

November 18, 1939.

There is attached a copy of a report shown to the undersigned by the Chief of the British Air Intelligence Services at Cairo, which has been compiled from reports from various British intelligence sources in East Africa giving an outline of the political, economic, military, air, and rebel activities in Abyssinia (Italian East Africa) up to October 28, 1939.

JAY WALKER.
Jay Walker.

Enclosure: Copy of Report.

SECRET.

SITUATION REPORT ON ITALIAN EAST AFRICA
BASED ON INFORMATION UP TO 28TH OCTOBER 1939.

(Portions sidelined in this report not to be quoted.)

Political.

1. (a) The general feeling at the present time among all classes of Italians in I.E.A. is that, if Italy is drawn into a war against the Democracies, she will lose her I.E.A. possessions.

(b) This feeling is shared by the Amharas whose hopes were greatly raised at the end of August when statements were made by the local authorities indicating that Italy was about to enter the war. These hopes were dashed when it was discovered in fact Italy had not entered the war. The Italian authorities have been prompt to take advantage of this discouragement by returning to the policy, recently abandoned, of appeasement. At the Feast of Mascal (25 Sept.) promotions of native chiefs were announced and largess was distributed; and redoubled efforts by propaganda and promises are now being made to tempt Ras Ababa Aregai and his sub-chiefs in the east, and the Gojjam and Beghemder

chiefs

chiefs in the west, to tender their submission. It does not appear that as yet these efforts have met with more than limited success.

Italian policy towards the Amharas has been subject to violent changes within the last year and this vacillation in itself defeats their aim of securing the pacification of the country. The policy up to the early part of this year had been one of stern repression, if not of terrorism. Then came a short period during which the policy of appeasement was tried. This gave way in August to an intensive effort - on orders from Rome - to stamp out the "rebellion" before the European War broke out; and now, as mentioned above, the policy of appeasement is to be resuscitated. There are indications, however, that this policy will not be continued if quick results are not obtained. A meeting of Commissioners in the Amhara Governorate is being convened at Gondar on 8 November to discuss the general direction of political action.

Propaganda.

2. As might be expected the Italians do not neglect propaganda, and their propaganda is carefully controlled from the centre. As newspapers do not circulate amongst the natives to any extent, propaganda is spread by means of speeches and talks by the Governors and Political Residents and by the dissemination of reports by paid native agents. Cases are reported of the Mohamedan religious leaders having been induced to help in this way among the Somalis and Danakil. The use of loud-speakers in the towns and the dropping of pamphlets from aero-planes over the countryside have also been resorted to recently.

The propaganda put out in August when war was imminent - i.e. notifying the people that Italy was about to be drawn into the war, stressing the might of Italy and the loyalty of the natives of the Empire and affirming the weakness of Great Britain and France - was not cleverly done and had the opposite effect to that intended in that it led many Abyssinians to join the "rebels" in the hope that the day of deliverance was at hand. The propaganda now put out is likely to be more effective. It takes the following line:-

(a) Great Britain and France are entirely self-seeking as has been shown by their conduct over China, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia and now Poland. They will never intervene in Abyssinia to give freedom to the Abyssinians, but only if they see a chance to supplant Italy in the possession of the country.

(b) As a fact Great Britain and France are proving quite unable to stand up to the Germans, witness the over-running of Poland and the fact that although the war has been going on for two months the British and French have been unable to achieve anything. (Every success of the Germans is promptly published at all the Commissariats in I.E.A.)

(c) This being the situation it is obvious that Germany can win the war without Italian help, and Italy will not therefore be drawn in. (Statements have been reported as having been made by Italian officers that Italy will await the time when France and Great Britain grow weaker to invade French and British territory - but this is probably irresponsible talk).

(d) The position of the Abyssinian "rebels" is therefore hopeless and they will be well advised to surrender quickly, in which case they will be granted amnesty and the "chiefs" will be given money and positions.

Economic Situation.

3. The economic life of the country is still disorganized. The volume of both internal and external trade is less than a quarter of what it was in 1935. The disturbed state of the country and the difficulty of obtaining foreign exchange are chiefly responsible for this state of affairs. Such movements of shipping as are recorded are connected with the problem of stocking the country with food and other supplies, and will be discussed below under the heading "Military - (Resources)".

The Italian authorities continue to do their best to prevent the export of currency. The Government owes the Franco-Italian Salt Co., seven million francs but declares itself unable to pay. Clients of the railway only pay their debts when forced to do so by the refusal to carry their merchandise. On the other hand the control of exchange instituted by the French authorities has greatly embarrassed Italian firms in Jibuti.

MILITARY

Resources.

4. (a) In view of the fact that in the event of war I.E.A. must be self-supporting, the question of the resources at the disposal of the Italian Command in food-stuffs, fuel, munitions, etc., becomes all-important.

(b) There has been in the past few months a scarcity of local grain supplies. The new harvest which is now (Oct.-Nov.) being gathered may suffice for the needs in the coming year of the native population, but there is no likelihood of any locally produced foodstuffs being available for the Italian communities, except perhaps meat.

(c) In the event of war the Italian authorities will be faced with the necessity of supplying the needs of the following:-

Italian white troops (including reservists recently called up)	65,000
Remainder of white population (settlers, labourers, commercial community, etc., and their families)	135,000
Italian Native Troops	80,000
Italian Banda (estimated)	15,000
Total	295,000

It is almost certain that the figure for the white population (taken from estimates made in 1936-7 and from a recent speech of General Nasi) is exaggerated - but if we assume a total of 250,000 we shall not be under-estimating.

(d) It is said that the Italian authorities are making it their aim to accumulate in I.E.A. stocks of food-stuffs, fuel, munitions, etc., sufficient to last a year. This would be a reasonable assumption, but it seems certain that they are at present a long way short of their objective.

(e) Foodstuffs. It has been evident that a shortage of foodstuffs has been causing them serious uneasiness. It is probable, however, that recent arrivals of grain and flour have improved the situation. During September 40,000 tons of grain and 4,000 tons of flour passed through the Suez Canal destined for I.E.A. also 650 tons of potatoes and 650 tons of sugar. Two shiploads of millet left Khokab for Assab at the end of the month. Figures are not yet available for October, but it is probable that arrivals of foodstuffs have continued. 4,000 tons of sugar are reported as having reached Addis Ababa. This would indicate that there is now 9 months to a year's supply of flour and sugar in sight. There is little information upon which to base estimates of stocks of other foodstuffs. Salt is available in any quantity. It is doubtful whether meat supplies can be procured in the country in considerable quantity. Cattle would be driven off in time of war and it is not known whether the Italians have installed a canning plant.

(f) Fuel. It is probable that not more than 3 months* supply of petroleum for active service conditions exists in I.E.A. - including aviation spirit, if intensive air activity is undertaken.

The Italians have been trying without much success to accumulate large stocks of coal on the Jibuti Railway on their side of the frontier.

Supplies of wood fuel - if cut and stocked in advance - should be plentiful.

(g) Munitions. Recent shipments to I.E.A. do not indicate any rush of supplies of munitions and military equipment. In the absence of any direct information it is probably safe to assume that stocks there are sufficient for a year. During September and October it was apparent that steps were being taken to bring the stocks of garrisons in the interior up to war strength.

(h)

*The French authorities at Jibuti estimate 6 months.

(h) War Materials Generally.

(i) Rolling Stock. The Italians have been manoeuvring for some weeks past to keep on their side of the frontier the rolling stock in the best condition belonging to the Jibuti Railway. The result of this battle of wits between themselves and the French is still in suspense.

(ii) Motor Transport. It is probable that the M.T. equipment some of which has been in use continuously for four years is showing signs of wear and tear. This is borne out by the recent despatch of 3 shiploads of M.T. vehicles from Massaua probably as scrap iron. There has been a great shortage of tyres over a long period. The composition of the Army Motor Transport in I.E.A. is not known with any accuracy. An Italian press report in July 1938 gave the total number of army vehicles of all sorts as 15,000. In addition the number of civilian lorries registered in June 1939 was 8,485.

(iii) Constructional Materials. There are saw mills in the forests west of Addis Ababa and in the Arussi Mountains south of the Jibuti Railway. 3,500 tons of timber and nearly 4,000 tons of cement and asphalt destined for I.E.A. passed through the Suez Canal in September. There is a cement factory at Dire Dawa where an inferior quality of cement is made. (Two bridges on main roads have recently broken down owing to the use of inferior cement).

Dispositions and Movements of Italian Land Forces.

5. (a) Except for much needed N.C.O's there have been no appreciable reinforcements from Italy in the past two months. Reservists in I.E.A. amounting - according to a statement made by the Italian Command - to 30,000 men have rejoined the colours. Strenuous efforts have been made to obtain recruits from Somalis and other tribes in the lowlands along the frontiers but have been met with a great deal of passive resistance. In Eritrea all able-bodied men over 17 years old have been called up.

(b) It is probable that the total strength of the forces in I.E.A. at the present moment is:-

White Troops.

Metropolitan troops	7,000
Permanent Militia	6,000
Temporary (Blackshirt)	
Militia	21,000
Ordinary Militia	<u>30,000</u> 64,000

Native Troops.

<u>80,000</u>	80,000
<u>15,000</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	159,000

(c) In general the tendency seems to be, as far as considerations of internal security will permit,

to

to concentrate these forces, whilst at the same time throwing out a screen round French and British Somaliland and the Sudan frontier opposite Kassala. These dispositions serve equally well for a defensive or an offensive policy, but the emphasis would seem to be clearly thrown on the defensive aspect. This is particularly clearly seen in the area bordering on French Somaliland. There are small frontier posts at Oualai, Dadato, Kimbere (S.E. of Lake Gum), Adeila and Ourgueni; and considerable garrisons at Sardo (on the Assab-Dessye road), Aicha (on the railway), Biocaboba and Jigjigga. The guards on the railway have been strengthened. Dire Daua, the military focus of the whole area, has become a veritable "place d'armes"; whilst the defences of Assab are being greatly strengthened. In the north and north-west the dispositions are not so clearly according to this pattern, possibly owing to serious internal disturbances in the Gondar area having compelled readjustment of plans to deal with them. However, this much seems to be established. In Gojjam a whole brigade has been concentrated at Ingebara, whilst arrangements have been made to withdraw other outlying posts to Bahardar Giorgis in the event of war. The dispositions may foreshadow concentration at Gondar and ultimately in Eritrea of all troops in the northwest. The forces in Eritrea seem to be concentrated at Asmara, Keren and Barentu with a large proportion of artillery at Asmara - but the situation is not sufficiently clear to form an accurate picture. A strong post has been established at Kibkib (Cubcub) in the northern angle of Eritrea covering the approaches to Tokar in the Sudan. The defences of Massaua have been strengthened.

Information as to the disposition of troops in Somalia and southern and south-western Abyssinia is too meagre for any generalizations to be made therefrom. Dispositions for the moment are probably governed primarily by considerations of internal security.

Strength and Dispositions of Italian Air Forces.

6. (i) The strength of the air forces in I.E.A. at the end of October was:-

Bombers	136
Fighters	28
Reconnaissance	18
	182

(ii) The distribution was as follows:-

Place.	Bombers.	Fighters.	Reccos.
Asmara	5	10	--
Guar	12	--	--
Gondar	12	--	--
Dessie	12	--	--
Addis Ababa	20	9	--
Moggio	--	--	9
Dire Daua	12	9	6
Assab	6	--	3
Gimma	12	--	--
Iavello	12	--	--
Neghelli	12	--	--
Mogadiscio	21	--	--
	136	28	18

(iii) The maintenance facilities in I.E.A. are very limited and the air force is consequently very dependent on supplies from Italy. Any Italian air effort must therefore be a very rapidly wasting one. The lack of local aircraft factories and maintenance facilities is the most important factor in assessing Italian air strength and must inevitably, in the future as it has been in the past, result in a restriction of the free use of the air force.

Rebel Activities.

7. (a) The North. There has recently been unrest in the whole area along the Sudan frontier lying between Lake Tana and the Eritrean border, and a recrudescence of "rebel" activity. This culminated in serious disturbances in the neighborhood of Mesfinto on 29-30 September when at the urgent request of the civil authorities the region was heavily bombed. On 6 October the rebels rushed the Italian post at Cafta, 30 miles north of Mesfinto, making a good haul of arms and ammunition. The post was re-occupied by the Italians on 8 October, when 500 men arrived there by lorry from Asmara. During the period 1-10 October the Mesfinto garrison had to be supplied by air.

(b) The West. At the end of September there was threatened trouble between the "rebels" and certain Amharas (probably Lij Aberra's men) who were said to be contemplating surrender to the Italians in the area between Burye and Dangila. The Italians moved out troops and bombed the region and the trouble did not materialise. On 6 October, however, a serious fight took place between Dajach Mangesha's forces and Aberra's following in the same area ending in the defeat of the latter. During the following week, the Italians carried out extensive aerial reconnaissance and bombing of the area to cover the movements of M.T. columns between Bahardar Giorgis and Dangila and between Motu and Debra Mai. It is said that Aberra will shortly make submission at Dangila and will then be used by the Italians in operations to be undertaken against Dajach Mangesha who is said to be located on the road between Bahardar Giorgis and Dangila. The Italians will possibly employ four native brigades.

(c) The Centre. Early in October there were minor operations directed by General Armellini in the Maraberic region 80 miles north of Addis Ababa. The general criticised the lack of co-operation between the civil and military authorities. He praised the 19th Colonial Bn. for the capture of 98 rifles at Debra Zebit. Raids are reported, but not confirmed, at Adama on the Jibuti Railway and on the outskirts of Addis Ababa itself.

(d) The East. Little has been heard of Ras Ababa Aregai's activities in the neighborhood of Ancober for the past few weeks. Information from Addis Ababa at

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the end of September indicated preparations by the Italians for operations against him. In view of the fact that in July he successfully engaged 6 Bns. of native troops who were sent to suppress him, these operations would have to be on a major scale. Meanwhile the Italians are said to have sent agents to him offering inducements to surrender.

(e) The South and South-West. Bombing and machine gunning of tribesmen near Mega was carried out from the Iavello aerodrome on 27 September. Otherwise no recent information is available of the situation in the South and South-west.

Conclusion.

8. If the data on which the above appreciation is based are correct, it would appear that - should war occur in the near future - the situation in I.E.A. might not be such as to enable the Italians to undertake in any major offensive action outside their own borders. There appear to be good grounds for the pessimistic attitude of the Italian population mentioned in para 1(a).

The longer war is deferred, however, the greater are the prospects of the internal situation being brought under control by the Italian authorities.



fw | Sb This latest report by Jay Walker regarding the situation in Ethiopia draws the conclusion that should Italy be drawn into war against the allies she would ~~not~~ probably not be able to engage in any offensive beyond the boundaries of Italian East Africa. The Italian inhabitants of that region go even further and feel that in the event of war, Italy would lose her East African possessions.

The natives share the latter feeling and have been hopeful that Italy would enter the war against the democracies. The longer war is deferred, however, the greater the chances of the internal situation being brought under the control of the Italian authorities.

This internal situation still appears to be one of unrest. Along the entire Sudan frontier between Lake Tana and Eritrea there has been a recrudescence of rebel activity, with some serious fighting and bombing. Operations in the west have involved aerial reconnaissance and bombing, as well as trouble between the rebels and certain groups of Amharas who contemplated surrender to the Italians. In other parts of the country there have been minor raids, bombing and

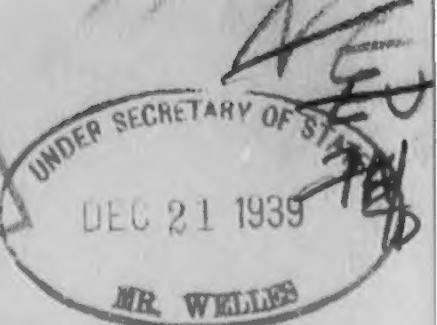
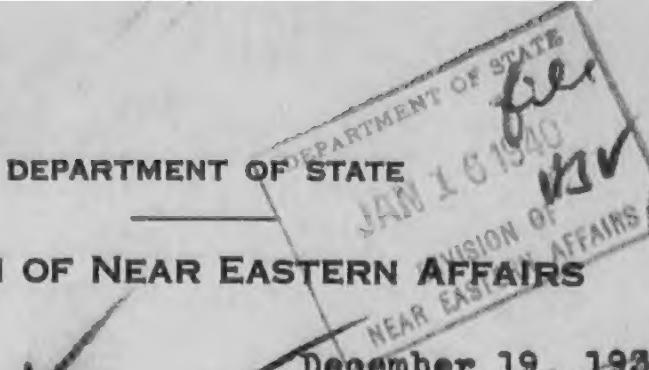
machine gunning of tribesmen, and efforts of the Italians to obtain the surrender of Ras Ababa Kregai.

Italian policy toward the Amharas is vacillating and thus tends to defeat itself. Repressive measures alternate with an "appeasement policy", the latter being tried again at present. Propaganda is being used to show that Germany can win the war without Italy's help, that the rebels had better give in and receive amnesty.

The economic life of the country is still disorganized. It is thought there would be a serious problem of feeding the Italian forces and civilians, totaling about 250,000. Munitions are believed sufficient for a year, but gasoline might last only 3 months if intensive activity were undertaken. Transportation and construction materials are showing wear and tear.

Figures are given on the strength and disposition of the troops and planes. Troops probably total 159,000, with 182 planes.

NSA
HSV



DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

A-B - Mr. Berle:
A-M - Mr. Messersmith:
U - Mr. Welles:
S - Mr. Secretary:

December 19, 1939.

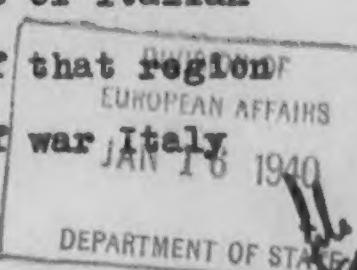


We have obtained further information in regard to the present situation in Ethiopia in the form of a memorandum prepared by Vice Consul Jay Walker at Cairo, based on a report of the British Air Intelligence Services from various British intelligence sources in East Africa. This report draws the conclusion that should Italy enter the war against the Democracies she would probably be unable to undertake any offensive beyond the boundaries of Italian East Africa, while the Italian inhabitants of that region go even further and feel that in the event of war Italy would lose her East African possessions.

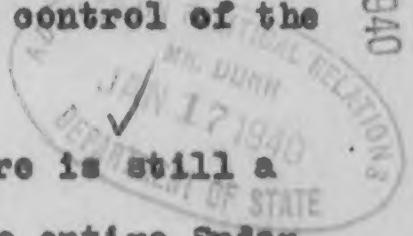
The native population in Ethiopia shares the feeling that Italy would lose her possessions in the event of war and has been eagerly hopeful that Italy would be drawn in on the side of Germany. However, the longer the war is deferred, the greater appear to be the chances of the internal situation being brought under the control of the Italian authorities.

According to this British report, there is still a good deal of unrest in Ethiopia. Along the entire Sudan frontier between Lake Tsana and Eritrea this autumn there

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has been a rerudescence of rebel activity, with some serious fighting and bombing. Operations in the western part of the country have involved aerial reconnaissance and bombing by the Italians, as well as local difficulties between rebel tribesmen and certain groups of Amharas who were said to have contemplated surrender to the Italians. In other parts of Ethiopia there have been minor raids, bombing and machine-gunning of tribesmen and efforts by the Italian authorities to negotiate for the surrender of various rebel leaders, among them the prominent Ras Ababa Aregai. Italian policy toward the natives appears to be a vacillating one, thus tending to defeat itself. Repressive measures alternate with an "appeasement policy", the latter being in force at the present moment. There are indications, however, that this policy will not be continued if quick results are not obtained. Carefully controlled propaganda has been used to show that Germany can win the war without Italian help, that Italy will not therefore be drawn in, and that the position of the rebels is hopeless. The rebels are advised to surrender quickly, and are being promised amnesty if they do so, as well as money and positions for the chiefs.

The economic life of the country is reported to be still disorganized. It is thought that there would be a serious problem of feeding the Italian military forces

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and civilians, which now are estimated at about 250,000. Munitions are believed sufficient to last for a year in the event of hostilities, but gasoline might last only three months if intensive activity were undertaken. Transport facilities are showing the effect of wear and tear, while defects have been discovered in constructional materials - such as cement used in building bridges.

The latest figures in regard to the strength and disposition of Italian troops and airplanes show that the military forces in Italian East Africa at this time total approximately 159,000 men. The strength of the air forces was 182 planes, with 136 bombers, 28 fighters, and 18 reconnaissance machines.

W.M.
Wallace Murray

ME H.S. Willard/GC
J.S.V.
J.W.

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Central File: Decimal File 865D.00, Internal Affairs Of States, Italian East Africa, Political Affairs., June 17, 1936 - December 19, 1939. June 17, 1936 - December 19, 1939. MS European Colonialism in the Early 20th Century. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, <link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5109726917%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC>. Accessed 18 June 2025.